

“WHAT’S THE MOTIVATION OF MIMICRY FASHION CONSUMPTION
BEHAVIOR?” THE MEDIATION EFFECT OF INSTAGRAM ACTIVITY
BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND MIMICRY CONSUMPTION

by

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(Under the Direction of Yoo-Kyoung Seock)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between consumer belongingness (social connectedness and social assurance) and subjective well-being, and in turn, intentional mimicry consumption. Also, Instagram activities examined in this study as mediator between subjective well-being and intentional mimicry consumption. American consumers age ranged 18-38 who are Instagram users were asked to participate in the survey. A structured online survey was developed and distributed through the company Survey Sampling International (SSI). A total of 223 female and male participants’ responses were analyzed in SPSS. Regressions were used to test relationship of variables and examine the mediation effect of Instagram activities. The findings revealed the significant relationships between all of the variables. Among the Instagram activities, only interaction had a mediation effect between subjective well-being and intentional mimicry consumption.

INDEX WORDS: Belongingness, Subjective well-being life satisfaction, Instagram activities, mediation effect, Intentional mimicry consumption

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my grandfather in heaven.

He was always proud of me and supported my dream and decision.

I love you so much and miss you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 covers the overall research background and addresses the processes of developing this research. This chapter contains the following sections: (1) background of the study; (2) justification/research gap; (3) demographic information; (4) purpose of the study; (5) research objectives; and (6) conceptual definitions.

Background of Study

The literature of mimicry consumption has been studied rigorously for many years based on the assumption that consumers monitor other people's consumption behavior and subsequently copy it (Ruvio, Gavish, & Shoham, 2013). However, most studies have focused on the negative side of mimicry consumption, identifying it as an undesirable behavior because it is usually accompanied by impulsive and irrational decision (Yoo, Kim, Kim, Ahn, & Jun, 2012; Sim, 2005). From the perspective of social science, however, mimicry behavior plays an important role as a social glue to aid in understanding communication (Lakin, Jefferis, Cheng, & Chartrand, 2003). Previous research demonstrates that consumers often mimic others' consumption behaviors and this mimicry behavior can further affect one's own preferences toward the consumed items (Tanner, Ferraro, Chartrand, Bettman, & Baaren, 2007). Typically, a role model has been widely considered the representative object of mimicry because attachment to,

interest in, and preference for someone is the root cause of mimicry consumption. Role models in previous research have been limited to super stars, actors, or mothers.

However, Bandura (1986) states that a role model can be anyone with whom the individual comes into contact, either directly or indirectly, who potentially can affect his or her decisions or behaviors. The definition of social environment has been expanded from in person to online interactions and provides opportunities to interact directly and instantaneously with not only peers and family but also influencers and marketers. This means that consumers selectively obtain information according to their preferences and make a purchase decision with the selected information. This environmental change significantly affects consumers' decision-making processes, since their purchasing behaviors are often influenced by their environments. According to Smith (2018), 72% of Instagram users make purchasing decisions based on the posts they saw while browsing Instagram. Salpini (2017) also noted that consumers, in particular, make fashion, beauty, or style-related purchases after seeing posts on Instagram. With the explosive growth of social media, mimicry consumption behavior today has become more prominent than ever before. Thus, mimicry consumption should not be treated as incomplete or impulse buying behavior only motivated by irrational states anymore. In order to understand mimicry consumption, it is imperative to investigate the antecedent motivations of consumers' mimicry buying behavior.

This study focuses on belongingness as the first antecedent psychographic factor that might influence mimicry buying behavior. In other words, mimicry behavior not only increases affiliation and closeness toward the mimicker but also helps to develop relationships with others (Tanner et al, 2008; Lakin et al, 2003). This implies that the

general consumer's desire for belongingness could be deeply related to mimicry consumption. Belongingness is defined as the general emotional distance between self and others among friends or close peers, that is, it encompasses both acceptance (or assurance) as a member and connectedness to other people in their social groups (Lee and Robins, 1995). The need to belong is regarded as a primary factor of human personality since humans are social animals who seek to maintain positive relationships with reference groups such as family and friends (DeWall, Deckman, Pnd Jr, & Bonser, 2011). As belongingness is the most fundamental element, it naturally affects human life and consumption behavior. Following previous research, consumers who feel a greater sense of belongingness in a virtual community showed fewer online compulsive buying tendencies (Lee & Park, 2008). Consumers who experienced social exclusion, in contrast, appeared to spend money intentionally for the sake of demonstrating affiliation (Mead, Baumeister, Stillman, Rawn, & Vohs, 2010). Therefore, because many consumers make their decisions in a social context (Tanner et al, 2008), belongingness should be regarded as a primary factor that influences consumer behavior.

The second underlying psychographic status beyond mimicry consumption is Subjective Wellbeing Life Satisfaction (SWLS). Life satisfaction is defined as the self-evaluation of one's psychological state by achieving one of the components of subjective well-being (Deiner, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002). In other words, it is a cognitive judgmental process of a person's quality of life according to his or her chosen criteria (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985; Shin & Johnson, 1978). Although SWLS has been widely studied in psychology, there is relatively little consumer behavior research on life satisfaction. In a unique demonstration of subjective wellbeing-related consumer

behavior, Andreasen (1984) notes that changes in consumer life status strongly affect their brand preferences, overall product satisfaction, and service purchases. Also, Silvera, Lacavk, and Kropp (2008) demonstrate that SWLS is negatively related to cognitive impulse buying tendencies. In turn, specific consumption behavior also has an effect on consumers' life satisfaction. Hudders and Pandelaere (2012) support the notion that luxury consumption has a positive impact on life satisfaction. The research of Xiao and Kim (2009) also supports the relationship between consumer life satisfaction and foreign brand purchasing. Likewise, life satisfaction is deeply related to consumers' buying behavior. It is imperative to account for consumers' belongingness and subjective wellbeing as motivations for mimicry consumption.

As noted earlier, the market environment is advancing rapidly, and social media is central to this shift. Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, and Logan (2012) assert that social media are becoming central to the way people experience news. Consumer can create and receive personalized information streams through the social media. Since consumer basically make a decision based on internal and external information, the environmental changes by social media greatly affect the lives of consumers. In some cases, people prefer to spend most of their time online and interact with people using social media because for them, social media activities play as significant a role as face-to-face interaction. Seidman (2013) demonstrates that Facebook, the most popular social media app, helps users to pursue their belongingness needs not sufficiently fulfilled through offline interactions. Also, the size of the social network has a positive relationship with life satisfaction or subjective well-being (Lee, Lee, & Kwon, 2011). These previous studies suggest that social media accounts for a large portion of consumers' lives.

From among the various social media platforms, this study investigates Instagram, the fastest growing social media service among young people (Wagner, 2015). Unlike the other SNS platforms, Instagram focuses on image content and exists primarily as a mobile-based application. For example, when connecting to Instagram with a laptop or PC, various activities are restricted, including uploading photos. The system is built in such a way that users can reap the greatest benefits out of Instagram via use on a mobile device. Furthermore, it is impractical to upload text-only content in Instagram, because Instagram is guided by the rule “image first, text second” (Lee, Lee, Moon, & Sung, 2015). The coined word, ‘TL;DR (Too long; did not read)’, reveals the current tendency of online users’ to prefer shorter messages with a clear delivery. It is evident that the act of ‘reading’ certainly incurs a greater cost than in the past. Instagram, with its mobile operating systems and visually-oriented content has greater potential to create diverse consumer motivations and cultures than do the other SNSs (Lee et al., 2015). Therefore, Instagram’s image-based content may strongly impact the consumers’ purchasing decisions and stimulate new buying behaviors. Although Instagram has grown in prominence and is being studied rigorously nowadays, fewer academic studies have focused on the effects of Instagram as a mediating factor between consumer psychological status and buying behavior. Past studies have investigated either the effect of social media on users’ psychological states or the psychological motivations for social media participation. Therefore, it is necessary to examine social media activities in this regard.

Justification/Research Gap

Mimicry behavior is, at its most basic level, a communication tool. In social psychological aspects, mimicry is defined as the “unconscious or automatic imitation of gestures, behaviors, facial expressions, speech and movements.” As mentioned above, humans naturally have a tendency to mimic the behavior of their interaction partners and mimicry behavior plays an important role in their social interaction (Lakin, 2003; Van Baaren, Janssen, Chartrand, & Dijksterhuis, 2009). While mimicry behavior is generally perceived as an automatic behavior that occurs even in the absence of individual awareness, when mimicking behavior comes applies to consumer behaviors, mimicry consumption may also happen with consumer awareness (Ruvio et al., 2013). From the perspective of consumer science, consumers’ intentional buying behavior is emphasized over their unintentional behavior, because incitement from other consumers leads to the desire to behave or look like them, and this desire inspires tangible actions to achieve this goal. Despite this emphasis, consumers’ intentional mimicry behavior is not clearly addressed in previous studies (Ruvio et al., 2013). Even though little is known about intentional mimicry consumption, the consumer behavior literature suggests two representative examples of intentional consumer behavior. First, previous studies have been limited to the early stages of consumers’ buying behaviors. For example, mimicry consumption has been discussed as an undesirable behavior, usually in reference to adolescent consumers who tend to make unstable decisions (Sim, 2005). Since peer pressure seriously affects teenagers’ consumption behavior, adolescent consumers mainly use the same brands as their peers (Moses, 2000). Specifically, teenagers have a tendency to follow role models’, such as celebrities, choices and preferences. (Lockwood &

Kunda, 1997). That is, in previous research, mimicry consumption has been analyzed in terms of adolescent behavior, often caused by peer pressure or media. Ruvio et al (2013) demonstrated that consumers tend to intentionally mimic others, but that study was limited to teens between the ages of 15 and 18 and their mothers. In the same context, models of the diffusion of innovations partially supports intentional mimicry. Innovation seekers try to buy new products following the opinions of widely-admired leaders who strongly influence consumers' purchasing or consumption behavior (Bertrandias & Goldsmith, 2006). To sum up, the previous research has examined a limited range of role models, such as celebrities, mothers, or innovators, as the imitation targets of adolescent or teenage consumers. However, as mentioned above, mimicry consumption happens when role models are perceived as such, and role models can be anyone with the potential to influence individual behavior. Moreover, unlike other social environments, social media provides content based on user preferences. That is, consumers can access information and communicate directly or indirectly with not only celebrities and other public figures, but also their friends, family and influencers, anytime and anywhere. The content produced by those whom consumers are interested in and follow cannot help but have an effect on consumers' behavior. To reiterate, 72% of Instagram users make purchasing decisions based on the posts they see while browsing Instagram. Therefore, social media is regarded as a trigger for mimicry consumption in this study. It will be first study to investigate mimicry consumption caused by social media use. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to understand consumers' psychological statuses (with an emphasis on belongingness and subjective well-being life satisfaction) that lead to

mimicry consumption, and to thus expand the scope of our understanding of mimicry consumption through social media usage.

Demographic Information

Research institutions have named each generational cohort so as to reflect its specific characteristics. The Pew Research Center defines the Millennial cohort as consisting of individuals who born between 1981 and 1996, ages ranging from 23-38 (in 2019). Generation Z is the demographic cohort succeeding the millennials and includes people who born between 1997 and 2012 (7 to 22 years of age). Unlike the Pew Research Center, according to KASASA (2019), generation Z individuals were born between 1995 and 2015. The distinction between generations may differ slightly from study to study because there are no universally accepted beginning and end dates, and generational characteristics often overlap. Therefore, the target population of this study includes both Millennials and early Generation Z individuals, comprising those born between 1981 and 2002, with ages ranging from 18 to 38 (in 2019). These parameters have been adopted because, as of August 2019, 33.8 percent of United States Instagram users were between 25 and 34 years old, with 18 to 24-year-olds, at 24.2 percent, as the second largest user group (Statista, 2019). Millennials and Generation Z have different values, behaviors, and lifestyles compared to other generations due to the dramatic changes that occurred in the overall socio-cultural and technological environments of the 1990s and early 2000s (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003; Turner, 2015). Generation Z in particular are identified as ‘digital natives,’ because they never experienced life without the Internet (Prensky, 2001). Both demographic cohorts have been exposed to the digital environment from

childhood, and they can use new technologies easily and adapt them for their consumption activities. Also, they respond better to image files and visual information than they do to text. In this way, the rapid growth of Instagram, with its visually oriented content, is in line with the characteristics these of new generations. As Lee et al (2015) assert, Instagram has great potential to create novel consumer cultures among this young population.

Purpose of Study

This study extends the scope of the current understanding of mimicry consumption as an intentional buying behavior. Mimicry consumption behavior has become more prominent than before since consumers easily accumulate self-centered information through social media and they make purchasing decisions according to this information. Anyone, including not only family, friends, celebrities, and influencers, but also any other people a consumer admires can affect his or her purchasing behavior. In order to understand mimicry consumption in depth, it is necessary to investigate the impact of consumers' belongingness on subjective well-being and explore subjective well-being as the antecedent motivations of mimicry consumption behavior. Therefore, the purpose of study is to focus on relationship between consumers' belongingness and subjective wellbeing and examine the effects of subjective well-being on mimicry consumption. This study also investigates the mediating effects of Instagram activities on the relationship between consumer subjective well-being and mimicry consumption.

Research Objectives

The overall objective of this study is to understand consumers' psychological status, which affects mimicry consumption, and to investigate how Instagram activities act as a mediator.

This study further adopts the following specific objectives:

- (1) To examine the effects of belongingness on subjective wellbeing life satisfaction.
- (2) To examine the effects of subjective well-being on mimicry consumption.
- (3) To examine whether of Instagram activities mediate the relationship between subjective wellbeing life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.

Conceptual Definitions

1. Mimicry consumption

Mimicry consumption is defined as buying behavior with the intention to mimic the consumption behavior of others with whom a consumer wants to resonate (Ruvio, Gavish, & Shoham, 2013).

2. Belongingness

Social connectedness refers to a general emotional distance between self and others among friends or close peers (Lee & Robbins, 1995).

Social assurance refers "to be related to one's reliance on other people" (Lee & Robbins, 1995).

3. Subjective well-being

Subjective wellbeing refers to the self-evaluation of one's psychological state with regards to happiness and life satisfaction (Deiner, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002).

Subjective wellbeing life satisfaction is defined as “a global sense of well-being from the respondent’s own perspective” (Diener et al. 2009).

4. Instagram Activities

Instagram is a mobile photo-sharing application which originally launched in 2010. In this study, Instagram activity will be categorized into three types- *interaction, browsing, and broadcasting*. ‘Interaction’ means communication directly involving other people in Instagram, ‘browsing’ means reviewing the newsfeed/homepage and checking out other profiles, and ‘broadcasting’ means sharing information that was not directed to specific individuals (Yang, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains the theoretical background and outline of a literature review derived from previous studies. The primary constructs used in this study are mimicry consumption, belongingness, subjective well-being, and Instagram activities. To better understand consumers' mimicry consumption, this study reviewed belongingness and subjective wellbeing as precedent elements that have an impact on mimicry consumption. In addition, it is necessary to understand whether social media usage may have a mediating effect between subjective wellbeing and mimicry consumption behavior. Instagram will be used as the primary social media and three types of activities- broadcasting, browsing, and interaction-are addressed in this study.

Theoretical Background

Social Identity Theory

The concept of social identity was first developed by Henri Tajfel (1972). Social identity is an individual's self-conception or knowledge that he or she belongs to a social group (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). People strive to achieve or maintain a positive social identity through emotional attachments to other members of a group (Tajfel 1974, p.69; Hogg, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). Hogg (2006) said that "social identity theory has become accepted widely as one of mainstream social psychology's most significant general theories of the relationship between self and group." Many social phenomena, such as crowd behavior, group cohesiveness, and group polarization, are explained based on

social identity theory, because social identity implies a psychological connection with other people in a group to which belongs (Hogg, 2006; Deaux, 1997). That is, people have a basic need to belong and they want to maintain relationships with others in group. Furthermore, this basic social need shapes individuals' social identities. Therefore, social identity exerts tremendous influence on not only one's sense of belonging but also overall life satisfaction. In advance, social identity would strongly influence consumers' behavior, desires, and/or intentions (Bagozzi, 2000). For example, social identity influences user behavior and user participation in online communities (Zhou, 2011). Additional research also shows that a consumer's social identification is positively related to purchase intentions with regards to environmental and ethical claims (Bartels & Onwezen, 2014). In a similar vein, social identity plays a significant role in determining whether users have positive online experiences (Huang, 2012). Likewise, social identity theory supports the relationship between social psychological status and consumers' behavior.

Social Comparison on Social Network Service

Social comparison is a pervasive and fundamental phenomenon in group life (Hogg, 2000). In order to construct social identities, people consistently compare themselves to members within their own group or those in other groups (Hogg, 2000). Wood (1996) defines social comparison as "the process of thinking about information about one or more other people in relationship to the self." There are two types of comparison: upward and downward. The upward comparison looks to superior others so as to improve and achieve goals besides self-evaluation. In downward comparison, however, individuals

compare themselves with inferior others to enhance their subjective well-being (Wills, 1981; Wood, 1989). This concept of social comparison is extensively used in the area of social network service research. The ubiquity of the Internet and social media has produced an online environment that acts as an alternative means to fulfill interpersonal needs. Seidman (2013) found that Facebook, the most popular social network service, has helped users to pursue their belongingness needs that are insufficiently fulfilled in off-line environments. That is, social network services have expanded the spaces in which people can engage in social comparisons. Previous research has primarily focused on either the negative or the positive effects of this social comparison. Lup, Trub, and Rosenthal (2015) demonstrate that more frequent Instagram use is associated with more positive social comparisons. Meier and Schafer (2018) described the positive aspects of social comparison through social media and supported the effects of social network services on user well-being.

To sum up, social comparison theory supports the tendency of people to compare themselves with others. And social media is providing an enormous platform in which social comparisons can take place. Based on social comparison theory, consumers' buying behavior can be considered the result of social comparison and social network services may also be the mediator that guides social comparison.

Mimicry Consumption

Previous research has focused on unconscious mimicry and automatic behavior. Unconscious mimicry behavior can be supported by the chameleon effect, which shows that humans have a tendency to automatically mimic behavior and mannerisms (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). That is, almost all mimicry research has focused on the mimicry of behaviors such as the vocalizations, facial expressions, and hand movements that occur in the context of social interactions. Tanner et al. (2008) pointed out this limitation of previous mimicry behavior research and asserted the importance of exploring the extent to which automatic behavioral mimicry extends to imitable consumption-orientated behaviors that occur outside of the context of direct interactions. They found that consumers automatically mimicked other people's consumption behaviors, and that this mimicry consumption also affected the preference for the product consumed. However, our understanding of unconscious mimicry behavior is also limited because such behavior is very flexible, and explaining it depends on how or whether our brains unconsciously recognize this influence, or the lack thereof (Van Raaren, Janssen, Chartrand, & Dijksterhuis, 2009). However, while mimicking behavior can automatically motivate consumption behavior, individuals may also intentionally make decisions and chose to follow those with whom they want to resonate (Rovio et al., 2013). Consumers gather information from other consumers through social communication and make a decision themselves based on this information (Flynn, Goldsmith, & Eastman, 1996). Therefore, Rovio et al. (2013), in support of the idea of intentional mimicry in consumptive behavior, have suggested a "doppelganger effect:" "[the] intentional inclination of the individual to mimic other people's consumption behavior". The

doppelganger effect can be either unidirectional or bidirectional (Rovio et al., 2013).

Unidirectional mimicry can occur in a situation when the consumer has no interaction or relationship with the figure that he or she wants to mimic. Specifically, role models, such as celebrities or supermodels, may make choices that, have a significant impact on teenagers' behavior (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). On the other hand, bidirectional mimicry happens when consumers do interact directly with those whom they want to mimic (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). In other words, unidirectional mimicry can be thought of as celebrity (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997) and directional mimicry as a close familial relationship, such as mothers (Rovio et al., 2013). However, contemporary consumers are surrounded by an enormous social environment. Social media provides opportunities for consumers to reach not only those who surround them directly, such as friends and family, but also strangers with whom they have no direct relationship, such as influencers and celebrities. Recent articles have lent support to the idea of intentional mimicry consumption behavior in social media environments. According to Smith (2018), 72% of Instagram users make purchasing decisions based on the posts they see while browsing the site. Salpini (2017) also noted that consumers are especially likely to make fashion, beauty, or style-related purchases after seeing posts on Instagram. However, studies thus far have not clearly addressed consumers' intentional mimicry behavior (Ruvio et al., 2013).

Belongingness and Subjective well-being

People want to confirm a subjective sense of belongingness or “being a part of” because humans are social animals who seek to have positive relationships with others, such as friends, family and surrounding people (DeWall, Deckman, Pond Jr, & Bonser, 2011; Kohut, 1984). By pursuing the need to belong, people also can avoid feelings such as loneliness and alienation (Kohut, 1984). Lee and Robbins (1995) described belongingness in two aspects, social connectedness and social assurance. Social connectedness is defined as subjective awareness in a close relationship and the general emotional distance between the self and others among friends or close peers (Lee & Robbins, 1995, 1998). Lee and Robbins (1995) further defined social assurance as the reliance on other people to sustain a sense of belongingness. As belongingness is fundamental to human nature, consumer behavior might vary somewhat according to the level of consumers’ belongingness. Belongingness is usually studied in conjunction with the subjective well-being life satisfaction. Previous researchers explored the link between achieving the sense of belonging and subjective wellbeing. For instance, social exclusion can be a major cause of anxiety and sense of belonging has a direct relationship with depression (Baumeister & Tice, 1990; Choenarom, Willams, & Hagerty, 2005). In the similar context with belongingness, subjective wellbeing accounts for a large part of consumers’ social life including social media usage. They also suggested that, in other ways, the more people spend time social media, the more they will believe that their overall well-being is improved by social media. Because social interactions and connectedness through social media make an abundant social capital and thus it enhances happiness and well-being (Munzel et al., 2017). Based on the previous research on

belongingness, this study adopted two constructs of belongingness: social connectedness and social assurance. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Consumer belongingness will have a significant impact on subjective well-being life satisfaction.

H1-1: Social connectedness significantly affects subjective well-being.

H1-2: Social assurance significantly affects subjective well-being.

Subjective Well-being Life Satisfaction (SWLS) and Consumer behavior

Subjective wellbeing is defined as self-evaluation of one's psychological state, including happiness and life satisfaction (Deiner, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002). Andrews and Withey (1976) identified the positive and negative influences on life satisfaction as subjective wellbeing components. Following the hierarchical model of happiness, specifically, subjective well-being is comprised of many constituents, including pleasant emotions, unpleasant emotions, global life judgments, and domain satisfaction (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2009). Diener et al. (1985) further categorized positive and negative affect as emotional aspects and life satisfaction as a cognitive-judgment aspect. These affective components reflect people's ongoing evaluation of their lives, so they take the form of emotions and moods (Diener et al., 2009). Moreover, emotions can often be considered short-lived reactions to specific events or external stimuli (Frijda, 1999; Morris, 1999). Thus, affective aspects are presumed unsuitable means by which to understand consumers' general behavior in this study. On the other hand, life satisfaction is a global judgement of the quality of life. One study presumed that people can examine their life conditions and evaluate their lives on a scale ranging from dissatisfied to

satisfied (Diener et al. 2009). To sum up, this study will understand consumers' subjective wellbeing based on the concept of life satisfaction: "a global sense of well-being from the respondent's own perspective" (Diener et al. 2009). Subjective consumer well-being has an impact on not only what they are paying attention to, but also their purchasing attitudes and behavior (Petrescu & Kara, 2018). Previous research has found that among consumers, a high level of hedonism value is negatively related to subjective wellbeing. In addition, impulse buying behavior, that is, unplanned purchasing decisions, is negatively related to consumer subjective wellbeing (Silvera, Lavack, & Kropp, 2008).

H2: Consumer subjective wellbeing life will have a significant impact on mimicry consumption.

Consumers' social media usage (Instagram Activities)

Many previous studies have claimed that people usually satisfy their needs for social belonging through face-to-face interactions, the basic communication channel, so the social network primarily occurs through off-line communication (Sacco & Ismail, 2014; Grieve, Indian, Witteveen, Tolan, & Marrington, 2013). However, online contact has become an alternative means to fulfill interpersonal needs since the growth of the Internet and social media. Seidman (2013) found that Facebook, the most popular social network service, has helped users to pursue their belongingness needs not sufficiently fulfilled off-line. Social media usage also can enhance the sense of belonging among young people (Allen, Ryan, Gray, McInerney & Waters, 2014). Most people use Facebook to achieve instant communication and connection with their friends (Cheung, Chiu, & Lee, 2011). That is, a strong need to belong is positively related to favorable

attitudes towards social media and the willingness to join social media (Gangadharbatla, 2008). In other words, belongingness is regarded as a primary motivation for social media use (Seidman, 2012) because social media provides a communication space so that people can share their opinions and exchange information. Therefore, social media use may stem from the need to belong (Gangadharbatla, 2008). Subjective wellbeing accounts for a large part of consumers' social lives including social media usage. Previous research finds that an individual who is satisfied with his or her life will be more motivated to use Facebook (Oliveira & Huertas, 2015). Munzel, Meyer-Waarden, and Galan (2018) also assert that subjective wellbeing significantly influences social media usage. They also suggested that, in other ways, the more people spend time on social media, the more they will believe that their overall well-being is improved by social media. Because social interactions and connectedness through social media produce abundant social capital and thus enhance happiness and well-being (Munzel et al., 2017).

Due to the fact that social media largely functions as an account of the lives of those who use it, social media activity influences purchasing behavior as well. Even though most previous studies have focused on the marketing perspectives of social media, consumer socialization through the new online channels has significantly altered consumer behavior as well (Lueg, Ponder, Beatty, & Capella, 2016). Many recent studies have identified the importance of communication with consumers through social media with regards to consumers' purchase intention (Balakrishnan, Dahnil, & Yi, 2014; Coulter, Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Schafer, 2012; Chu, Kamal, & Kim, 2013; Dehghani & Tumer, 2015). For example, Facebook has positive effects on consumers' word of mouth activities and purchase intention (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013).

However, there has been limited research thus far to see both the psychological motivation of consumer social media use and how this psychological status reveals behavior through social media. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Instagram activities will have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between consumer subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.

H3-1: Instagram interaction has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being and mimicry consumption.

H3-2: Instagram browsing has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being and mimicry consumption.

H3-3: Instagram broadcasting has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being and mimicry consumption.

Proposed Research Model

The following research model is proposed from the above discussion:

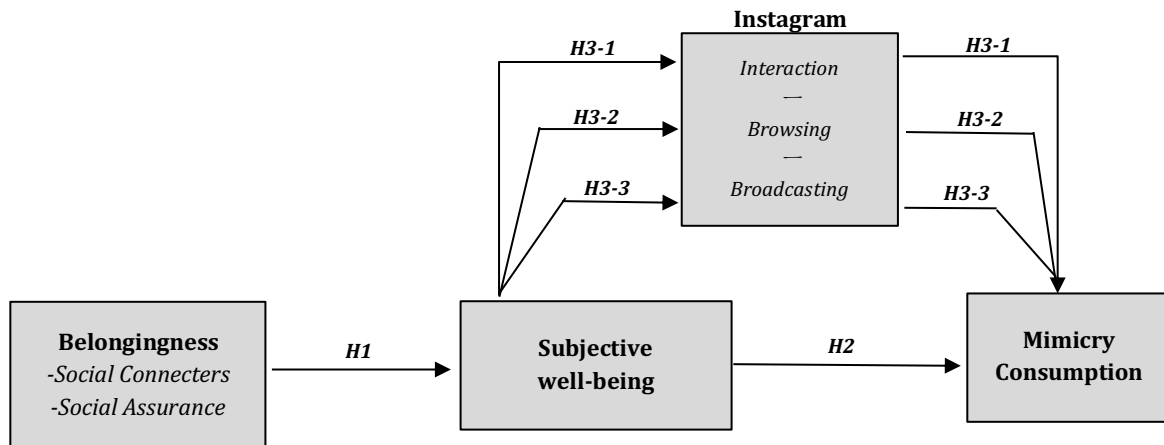


Figure 1.1. Proposed Research Model

Research Hypothesis

From the preliminary discussions, the following hypotheses are justified:

H1: Belongingness significantly affects subjective well-being (life satisfaction)

H2: Subjective well-being (life satisfaction) significantly affects mimicry consumption.

H3: Instagram activities will have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between subjective well-being (life satisfaction) and mimicry consumption.

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of the study, the operational definitions of this research are as follows:

1. Mimicry consumption: mimicry consumption refers to the degree of consumers' buying behavior with the intention to mimic other people's consumption behavior whom he or she resonate
2. Belongingness: belongingness refers to the degree of a general emotional distance between self and others in group and one's reliance on other people
3. Subjective well-being Life satisfaction refers to the degree of a global sense of well-being from the respondent's own perspective.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to measure consumers' psychological statuses (belongingness and subjective well-being) and to examine the effects of these states on mimicry consumption. In addition, Instagram activities were investigated as a mediator between consumers' psychological status and mimicry consumption. This chapter consists of instrument development, data collection and sampling, and data analysis.

Measures

This study conducted an online survey to examine how the basics of consumers' psychological statuses might influence mimicry consumption and to examine the mediating effect of Instagram activities on the relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption. This online survey questionnaire consists of six sections, including screening questions and demographic questions. Belongingness and subjective well-being were measured to identify consumers' psychological status. The other variables (Instagram activities and intentional mimicry consumption) also was measured in this study. All the variable and measurement scale were adapted from previous studies and were modified accordingly to produce versions that better fit this study. A total of 100 questions was developed and 32 out of this 100 was used to measure the variables in this study. All the items in the survey used a five-point Likert scale, using 1 to represent "not at all" and 5 to represent "very much".

The first section consisted of consent form and two screening questions and four subitems. The first screening question asked the participants' age range. The participants that reported their age range under 18 or over 38 were excluded from this study. And the second screening question asked whether participants have an Instagram account or not. The participants who did not have an Instagram account were also excluded from this study. The four subitems proceeded to ask whether respondents are active on Instagram and the amount of time they spend on Instagram. The second screening question asked participants if they have experience mimicking the buying behaviors of the people they follow on Instagram for fashion and cosmetic items. The respondents who answered in the negative were also excluded from this study. The respondents who have experience mimicking buying behaviors listed up to five fashion and/or cosmetic items that they have most frequently mimicked to answer the following sub-question.

The second section examined consumers' mimicking buying behaviors. Participants answered the following question: "How much have you mimicked the buying behaviors of the people listed below?" Then, participants selected their degree of mimicry consumption behavior from "very much (1)" to "not at all (5)". Three questions, adapted from Ruvio, Gavish, and Shoham (2013), were provided to participants: (1) Over the past 6 months, have you ever bought the same or similar fashion and/or cosmetic products that people around you use?, (2) Over the past 6 months, have you ever bought the same or similar fashion and/or cosmetic products that people you admire use?, (3) Over the past 6 months, have you ever bought the same or similar fashion and/or cosmetic products that people you aspire that to be like?.

In the third section, Instagram activities were measured with survey questions adapted from Yang (2016). Instagram activities were categorized into three types: Instagram interactions, Instagram browsing, and Instagram broadcasting. Three items were adapted to measure Instagram interaction; two items were adapted to measure Instagram browsing; three items will be adapted to measure Instagram broadcasting. Participants were asked to respond to statements such as “When I use Instagram, I often comment on or reply to others’ posts,” “When I use Instagram, I often browse the feed/stories without leaving comments,” “When I use Instagram, I often post something that is not directed to specific people.” Also, participants were asked about their feelings after performing each type of Instagram activity. To help participants describe their feelings, instructions were given at the top of the questionnaire form. The participants opened their Instagram account and find their recent activity from the previous few days. After checking Instagram, the participants took a moment to think about the feelings they experience when using Instagram. A total of 18 items were used to measure the participants’ feelings. Six items related to feelings such as sadness, happiness, and cheerfulness were adapted from McGreal and Joseph (1993), and four items addressing loneliness, anxiety, and restlessness were adapted from Litwin and Shiovitz-Ezra (2010). The other items--depression, joy, relaxation, delight, excitement, worry, being disturbed, and being pleased—were used to gauge participants’ feelings. To sum up, nine items are related to negative feelings and the other nine items measure positive feelings

As the last part of third section, the participants answered questions about their experience with the Instagram app. The questions asked participants if they have ever deleted an Instagram app or account in their phone. Those who responded positively

shared the reasons why they deleted their Instagram app or account at that time, using up to 1000 characters.

The fourth and fifth sections were made up of the items for measuring consumers' psychological status. The fourth section contained seven items used to examine the consumer's subjective well-being. Four items ("In most ways, my life is close to my ideal," "I'm satisfied with my life," "So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life," and "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing") were adopted and one item ("In general, my life conditions are excellent") were adapted from Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). In addition, two items ("I am very content with my life," and "I am living my life to the fullest") were adapted from Lavalley, Hatch, Michalos, and McKinley (2007).

The fifth section was designed to measure consumers' belongingness (social connectedness and assurance) with fourteen items. Four items were adopted from Malone, Pillow, and Osman (2012) and two from Lee and Robbins (1995) to measure social connectedness. Statements include "When I am with other people, I feel included," "I have close bonds with family and friends," "I feel accepted by others," "I feel connected with others," "I have a sense of togetherness with people," and "I feel no distance from people." Also, the final eight items were adapted from Lee and Robbins (1995) to measure social assurance. Statements such as "I feel more comfortable when someone is constantly with me," "I'm more at ease doing things together with other people," and "I stick to my friends like glue" were included.

Section six contained demographic questions to better understand participants' backgrounds. Basic demographic information about a participants' gender, age, job status, annual household income, and current residence were requested.

Instrument Development

The scales and constructs that have been adapted from previous research for each variable in this study are as follows:

Table 3.1
Survey instrument items and their references

Instruments	References
Mimicry consumption Buying same or similar product _____ that people around me use that people I admire use celebrities/influencers use	(Ruvio, Gavish, & Shoham, 2013)
Belongingness When I am with other people, I feel included Sense of togetherness with people Close bonds with family and friends Feel accepted by others Feel no distance from people Feel connected with others Fell more comfortable when someone is constantly with me More at ease doing things together with other people Working with others is more comfortable than working alone My life is incomplete without a buddy It's hard for me to use my skills and talents without someone beside me Stick to my friends like glue Join groups more for the friendship than the Activity itself Wish to find someone who can be with me all the time	(Malone, Pillow, & Osman, 2012) (Lee & Robbins, 1995)
Subjective wellbeing life satisfaction Most ways, life is close to one's ideal In general, one's life conditions are excellent Have gotten the important things I want in life Satisfied with one's life Content with one's life Living one's life to the fullest If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	(Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) (Lavalley, Hatch, Michalos, & McKinley, 2007).
Instagram activities Comment on or reply to others' posts Tag others in posts to share the contents Reply to others in my post Browsing the feed/stories without leaving comments Check out others' profiles without leaving comments Post something that is not directed to specific people Post/upload something on my profile/story with tagging someone Post/upload something on my profile/story without tagging anyone	(Yang, 2016)
Feelings	

Depressed, Sad, Lonely,
Happy, Positive mood, Joyous,
Cheerless, Pleased,
Relaxed, Delighted,
Excited, Cheerful,
Anxious, Worried,
Restless, Disturbed, Tired, Run down

(McGreal & Joseph, 1993)
(Shiovitz-Ezra, 2010)

Data Collection and Sampling

The sample population of the study ranged from ages 18 to 38 and include male and female consumers who are Instagram users. The participants were in the Millennial and Generation Z cohort based on the definition provided by Pew Research (that is, born approximately between 1981 and 2001). IRB approval was required to collect the data for this study. Following IRB approval, online survey was conducted to obtain a sufficient number of participants through the Survey Sampling International company (SSI).

Data Analysis

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used to analyze the collected data from the online surveys. Upon the completion of data collection, reverse coding was developed. For this study, regression analysis (multiple, bivariate, and mediation effect) was run to determine the association between variables used in this research. Furthermore, mediation analysis was performed to test the mediating effects of Instagram activities on the relationship between the subjective well-being life satisfaction and intentional mimicry consumption. Descriptive statistics and frequencies were analyzed based on the demographics and feelings related to Instagram activities

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The objective of this study was to investigate the impacts of consumer belongingness on the consumer subjective well-being life satisfaction, and in turn, mimicry consumption behavior. The study also investigated the mediating effects of Instagram activities—interaction, browsing, and broadcasting on the relationship between the subjective well-being and mimicry consumption behavior. This study employed a research data collecting company, Survey Sampling International (SSI), to recruit participants of the study who are 18-38 years old and have an account on Instagram in the United States. As described in the Method chapter, Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, regression analyses (bivariate regression, multiple regression, and multi-mediation effect) were implemented to test potential relationships among the variables.

Participant Demographics

The participants demographic information included gender, age, job status, income, residential status, level of Instagram activity (Table 4.1). The total number of participants is 233. Of the total participants, 72.5% of respondents were female and 27.0% of respondents were male. Since the target population of this study comprised those born between 1981 and 2002, with ages ranging from 18 to 38 (in 2019), the respondents who were under 18 or over 38 was not counted as valid data. The majority of the respondents reported an age range of 25-38, representing 76.0% of the overall participants. The rest of respondents reported an age range of 18-24 (24.0%). More than half of participants (54.5%) are full time employee and 12.0% were working as part-time

worker. 25.3% of the respondents were unemployed and only 8.2% were reported as students. Lastly, 3% of the respondents reported their job status as 'others.' The respondents with annual incomes less than \$25,000 were 22.7%. A slightly lower percentage of participants (17.6%) rated their annual incomes at between \$25,000 to \$34,000, followed by \$35,000 to \$44,999 (12.0%). An annual household income ranging from \$45,000 to \$54,999 and from \$55,000 to \$64,999 was reported by 11.6% and 10.3% of the respondents, respectively. Also, 4.7% of the respondents rated annual incomes between \$65,000 to \$74,999, and 4.3% of respondents answered annual incomes at \$75,000 to \$84,999. Finally, 2.6% of the respondents reported their incomes between \$85,999 to \$94,999, 4.3% of respondents reported their incomes at between \$95,000 to \$104,999, and the remaining 9.9% indicated an income of more than \$105,000. The majority of the participants (66.1%) were currently living in a house and 30.9% were living in an apartment. Only 3.0% of respondents reported that they were currently living in dormitory. Additionally, more than half of the participants (51.1%) were living with a spouse, 27.5% of the respondents were living alone and 12.4% were living with their parents. The remaining 9.0% of the respondents were living with roommate. As for the Instagram usage frequency, the majority (89.7%) of the respondents reported that they are active on Instagram and only 3.4% of respondents answered that they are not active on Instagram. The remaining 6.9% of the respondents reported as 'maybe.' 39.5% of the respondents were using Instagram less than 1 hour per day and 32.6% of the respondents were using Instagram 1 to 2 hours a day. Also, 14.6% of respondents reported that they use Instagram 2 to 3 hours a day and 7.4% of respondents were using Instagram 3 to 4

hours a day. Six-point percentage spent more than 4 hours a day. Table 4.1 below summarizes the demographic profile of the participants.

Table 4.1
Demographic Profile of Sample

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	169	72.5%
	Male	63	27.0%
	Other	1	0.5%
Age	18 to 24	56	24.0%
	25 to 38	177	76.0%
Job Status	Unemployed	59	25.3%
	Student	19	8.2%
	Part-time	28	12.0%
	Full-time	127	54.5%
	Others	7	3.0%
Income	Less than \$25,000	53	22.7%
	\$25,000 to \$34,999	41	17.6%
	\$35,000 to \$44,999	28	12.0%
	\$45,000 to \$54,999	27	11.6%
	\$55,000 to \$64,999	24	10.3%
	\$65,000 to \$74,999	11	4.7%
	\$75,000 to \$84,999	10	4.3%
	\$85,999 to \$94,999	6	2.6%
	\$95,000 to \$104,999	10	4.3%
	More than \$105,000	23	9.9%
Residential Status	Dormitory	7	3.0%
	Apartment	72	30.9%
	House	154	66.1%
	live myself	64	27.5%
	live with roommate	21	9.0%
	live with parents	29	12.4%
	live with spouse	119	51.1%
Instagram Active	Yes	209	89.7%
	Maybe	16	6.9%
	No	8	3.4%
Hours on Instagram Per Day	Less than 1 hour	92	39.5%
	1 to 2 hours	76	32.6%
	2 to 3 hours	34	14.6%
	3 to 4 hours	17	7.3%
	More than 4 hours	14	6.0%

Descriptive Statistics

As displayed in Table 4.2, the means and standard deviations were computed for all variable. Among the variables, browsing had a highest mean score (3.816) with a standard deviation of 0.800 and mimicry consumption had a lowest mean score (2.818) with a 1.118 standard deviation score. Social connectedness had a 3.334 mean score with a 0.968 standard deviation and social assurance had a 3.006 mean score with a standard deviation of 1.007. Subjective well-being life satisfaction had a 3.423 mean score with a standard deviation of 1.043. Lastly, interaction had a 3.283 mean score with a standard deviation of 0.972 and broadcasting had a 3.305 mean score with a standard deviation of 0.819.

Table 4.2
Mean, Standard Deviations, and Reliability for all Variable

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Belongingness	Social Connectedness	233	3.334	0.968	0.916
	Social Assurance	233	3.006	1.007	0.901
SWLS		233	3.423	1.043	0.939
Mimicry Consumption		233	2.818	1.118	0.900
Instagram Activities	Interaction	233	3.283	0.972	0.803
	Browsing	233	3.816	0.800	0.631
	Broadcasting	233	3.305	0.819	0.605

Reliability

To identify of the repeatability and stability of the test results, a reliability analysis was performed to ensure the reliability of each scales. Cronbach's Alpha was used in this study to confirm the internal consistency of a set of multi-item scales.

Following George and Mallery (2003), Cronbach's alpha score has to be above 0.90 to be

considered as ‘Excellent’ and above 0.80 considered as ‘Good’. Six items of social connectedness had a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.916. Seven items of social assurance had a score 0.901. Subjective well-being life satisfaction had a score of 0.939 with seven items. Mimicry consumption had a score of 0.900 with three items. Among the Instagram activities, Interaction with three items had a score of 0.803. Although browsing (0.631) and broadcasting (0.605) had relatively low scores, the Cronbach’s alpha score above 0.60 is considered as ‘Acceptable’(George & Mallery, 2003). Therefore, as shown in Table 4.2 above, all of the variables in this study were considered reliable.

Factor Analysis

Before performing the regression analyses and testing hypotheses, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation was conducted for the consumers’ belongingness. Belongingness were appropriate for factor analysis based on the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling adequacy (0.939) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$). To set the criteria for the factor analysis, factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and items with rotated factor loading of 0.50 or greater were retained. To make sure that each item only loaded on one factor, any item loading on more than one factor with a loading score equal to or greater than 0.40 on both factors were eliminated from the analysis. Also, variables with communalities less than 0.40 were dropped because of an insufficient contribution. A total of 14 candidate statements(items) used in the EFA, one item was dropped because it had rotated loadings greater than 0.40 on two factors. Please see the table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3
A Deleted Item in Factor Analysis for Belongingness

		Factor 1	Factor 2
		Social connectedness	Social assurance
1	I'm more at ease doing things together with other people	.579	.576

Among the 14 items of belongingness, 13 items were retained for next factor analysis. Two belongingness constructs were identified: Social connectedness (Factor 1) and Social assurance (Factor 2). These two factors indicated that 67.36% of the total variance was explained. As displayed in Table 4.4., social connectedness had an eigenvalue of 4.42 and 34.03% of the total variance with Cronbach alpha 0.916. Social assurance had an eigenvalue of 4.33 and 33.33% of the total variance with 0.901 Cronbach alpha value.

Table 4.4
Factor Analysis for Belongingness

Factors (Mean)	Items	Eigen Value	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha
Total				67.36	
<i>Factor 1: Social Connectedness</i> (M=3.33)	I feel connected with others	4.42	0.84	34.03	0.916
	I feel accepted by others		0.83		
	I have a sense of togetherness with people		0.79		
	When I am with other people, I feel included		0.76		
	I feel no distance from people		0.76		
<i>Factor 2: Social Assurance</i> (M= 3.01)	I have close bonds with family and friends	4.33	0.75	33.33	0.901
	I wish to find someone who can be with me all the time		0.79		
	It's hard for me to use my skills and talents without someone beside me		0.76		
	My life is incomplete without a buddy beside me		0.75		
	I feel more comfortable when someone is constantly with me		0.73		
	I stick to my friends like glue		0.73		
	I join groups more for the friendship than the activity itself		0.71		
	Working side by side with others is more comfortable than working alone		0.68		

Regression Analyses

(1) Hypotheses Test 1

Multiple regression was used to test hypotheses 1 and bivariate regression was used to test hypotheses 2. Multiple regression was conducted to examine the relationships of belongingness (social connectedness and social assurance) with subjective well-being life satisfaction. A bivariate regression was conducted to investigate the relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and intentional mimicry consumption.

Table 4.5
Multiple Regression Analyses for Hypothesis 1

Independent Variable	DF	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value
Social Connectedness	2	0.631	10.355***
Social Assurance	2	0.126	2.068
R ²		0.519	
P		.000	
F (2, 230)		123.920	

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

Dependent variable: Subjective well-being life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that social connectedness and social assurance would significantly affect subjective well-being life satisfaction. The multiple regression analysis tested the significance of belongingness (social connectedness and social assurance) toward consumers' subjective well-being life satisfaction. The overall

regression model was significant, ($R^2 = 0.519$), $F(2, 230) = 123.920$, $p < .001$. Social connectedness ($\beta = 0.631$, $p < .001$) exerted significant main effects on the subjective well-being life satisfaction. However, subjective well-being life satisfaction was not significantly explained by level of social assurance ($\beta = 0.126$, $p = 2.068$). Therefore, H1a was supported, however, H1b was not supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that subjective well-being life satisfaction would significantly affect intentional mimicry consumption. The bivariate regression analysis performed to test the significance of SWLS toward consumer intentional mimicry consumption. The overall regression model was significant, ($R^2 = 0.226$), $F(1, 231) = 67.414$, $p < .001$. The results revealed that subjective well-being life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.475$, $p < 0.001$) were found to be significant predictors of intentional mimicry consumption behavior.

Table 4.6
Bivariate Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 2

Independent Variable	DF	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value
SWLS	1	0.475	8.211***
R^2		0.226	
P		.000	
F (1, 231)		67.414	

*** $p < .001$

Dependent variable: Mimicry Consumption

(2) Mediation Effect

Table 4.7

Direct and Total Effect from Regression-based Mediation Analysis for Hypothesis 3

Total effect of X on Y					
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.5097	.0621	8.2106	.0000	.3874	.6320
Direct effect of X on Y					
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.3648	.0630	5.7901	.0000	.2407	.4890

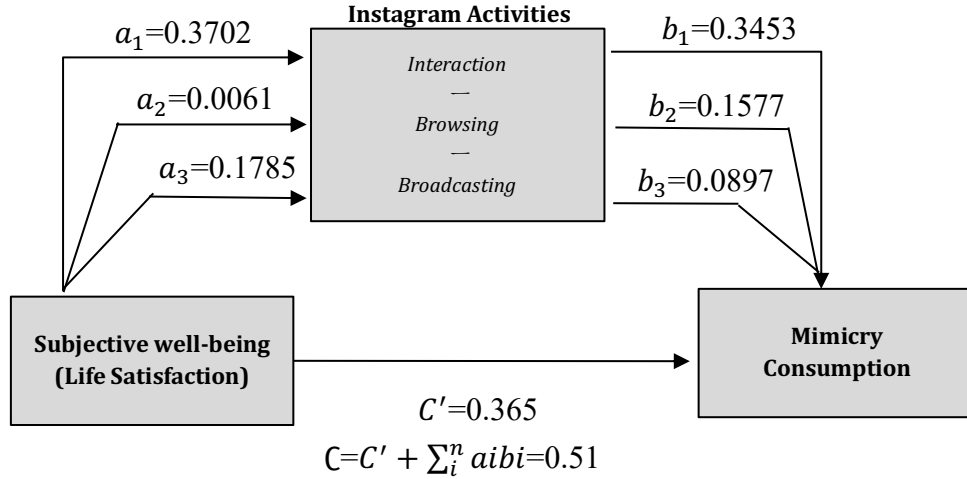
Hypothesis 3: Instagram activities-interaction, browsing, and broadcasting would have a significant mediating effect of consumer subjective wellbeing life satisfaction on mimicry consumption behavior. Also, specific indirect effects (H3-1, H3-2, H3-3) were examined. To determine the significance of the indirect effects, bootstrap confidence interval approach was used because this approach tends to be more powerful than the normal theory approach (Hayes, 2018). According to Hayes (2018), if the value between BootLLCI and BootULCI does not contain zero, then the mediation effect is statistically significant. However, if the confidence interval straddles zero, the conclusion is that there is insufficient evidence that X affects Y through M_i . Bootstrap confidence intervals for the specific indirect effects were generated by the y PROCESS using the percentile method. By default, a 95% bootstrap confidence interval was applied to test the indirect effect, using 5,000 bootstrap samples. The SPSS version of the macro was used. The estimated and 95% CIs are in Table X.

Table 4.7-2
Indirect Effect from Regression-based Mediation Analysis for Hypothesis 3

Indirect Effect of X on Y				
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
TOTAL	.1448	.0378	.0770	.2236
Interaction	.1279	.0370	.0592	.2053
Browsing	.0010	.0087	-.0168	.0208
Broadcasting	.0160	.0201	-.0216	.0589

The total indirect effect for a model including three mediators is simply the sum of the specific indirect effects; that is, $f = a_1b_1 + a_2b_2 + a_3b_3$, which is also the difference between the total (C) and the direct effect (C') of X on Y. The total indirect effect of X (Subjective Well-being Life Satisfaction) on Y (Mimicry consumption behavior) is $f = a_1b_1(0.1279) + a_2b_2(0.0010) + a_3b_3(0.0160) = 0.1448$. In multiple mediation models, the researcher was concerned not only with the total indirect effect of X (Subjective Well-being Life Satisfaction) on Y (Mimicry consumption), but also with specific indirect effects (H3-1, H3-2, and H3-3). The specific indirect effects are $a_1b_1 = .1279$ (through interaction), $a_2b_2 = .0010$ (through browsing), $a_3b_3 = .0160$ (through broadcasting). Of the potential mediators examined, Interaction was the only important mediators among the three activities.

Figure 4.1. Regression based Mediation Analysis Result



More specifically, the first indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption is modeled through Instagram interaction, estimated as $a_1 b_1 = (0.3702)(0.3453) = .1279$. Bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption through Instagram interaction is 0.0592 (BootLLCI) and 0.2053 (BootULCI). If the confidence interval is entirely above zero, the indirect effect is positive, which means that it is statistically significant (Hayes, 2018). That is, those who exhibited more satisfaction with the life showed more mimicry consumption. A second indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption is modeled through Instagram browsing, estimated as $a_2 b_2 = (0.0061)(0.1577) = 0.0010$. Bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption through Instagram browsing is -0.0168 (BootLLCI) and 0.0208 (BootULCI). As the confidence interval straddles zero, this does not support the positive indirect effect, indicating that the indirect effect is statistically insignificant. The conclusion is that there is an insufficient

evidence that the consumer SWLS affects mimicry consumption behavior through Instagram browsing.

A third indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption is modeled through Instagram broadcasting, estimated $a_3b_3 = (0.1785)(0.0897) = 0.0160$. Bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption through Instagram broadcasting is -0.0216 (BootLLCI) and 0.0589 (BootULCI). As the confidence interval straddles zero, this does not support the positive indirect effect, indicating that the indirect effect is statistically insignificant. This leads to a conclusion that there is an insufficient evidence that the consumer SWLS affects mimicry consumption behavior through Instagram broadcasting. Direct effect (C'), or the effect of the SWLS, is independent of the effect of the proposed mediators (interaction, browsing, broadcasting, on mimicry consumption is $C' = 0.3648$, $p = 0.0000$). Besides, considering a confidence interval is $0.3874 \leq rC' \leq 0.6320$, we can assert that the direct effect of SWLS on mimicry consumption behavior, which is the independent of the effect of the proposed mediators, is significant.

Table 4.8
Findings from the Current Study

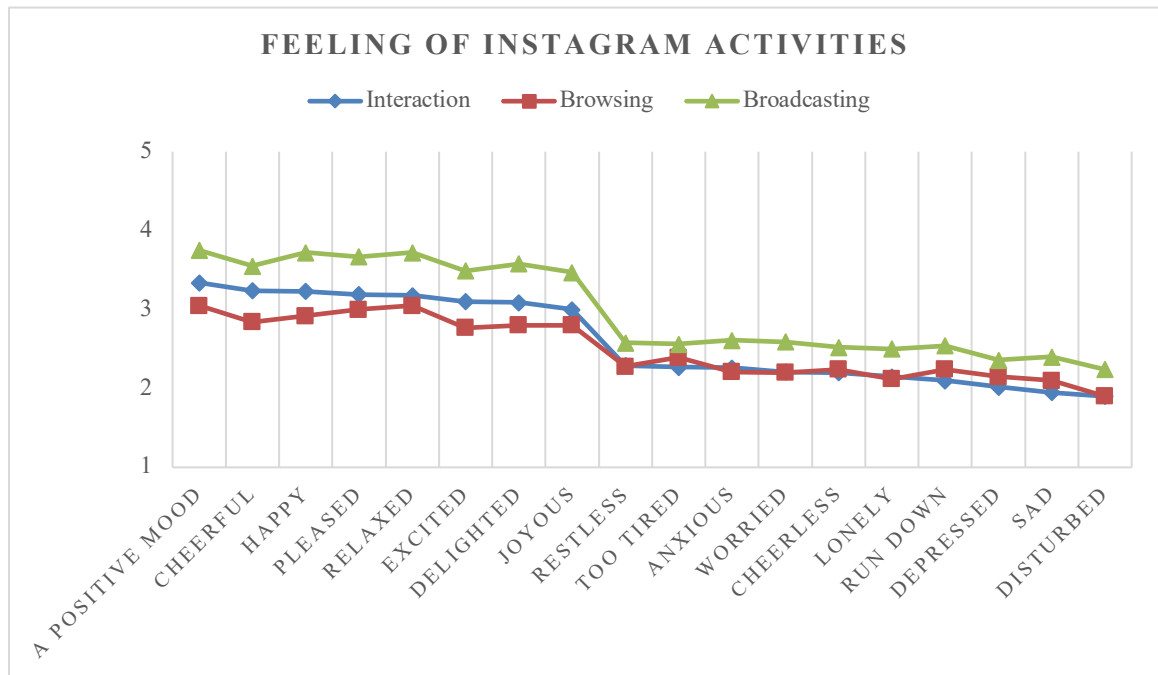
Hypotheses	Findings
H1: Belongingness significantly affects subjective well-being life satisfaction.	Partially Supported
H1-1: Social connectedness significantly affects subjective well-being life satisfaction.	Supported
H1-2: Social assurance significantly affects subjective well-being life satisfaction.	Not Supported
H2: Subjective well-being life satisfaction significantly affects mimicry consumption.	Supported
H3: Instagram activities will have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.	Partially Supported
H3-1: Instagram interaction has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.	Supported
H3-2: Instagram browsing has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.	Not Supported
H3-3: Instagram broadcasting has a mediation effect on relationship between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption.	Not Supported

Additional Analyses of Interest

Although it is not a main research objective, the emotion/feeling were measured to better understanding of participants' Instagram usage. Participants indicated that they feel different emotions while using Instagram. As shown in Table X, participants reported that they have higher states of eight positive emotions, ranging from a positive mood to joyous. On the other hand, participants reported that they have lower states of the ten negative emotions, ranging from anxious to disturbed. This result implies that most people use Instagram when they are in positive emotional states. Particularly, as shown in Table X, broadcasting activity on Instagram shows greater mean values of broadcasting

than interaction and browsing activities across different emotions. The greater mean values of emotions in broadcasting activity suggest that people are very likely to express and share their emotions on social media through broadcasting activities. Also, the result shows that participants felt higher states of positive emotions while interacting with others on Instagram. As they felt negative emotions, they tend to browse more than interacting on Instagram.

Figure 4.2
Feeling of Instagram Activities (Mean value)



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study explored how consumer belongingness would influence on subjective well-being life satisfaction, in turn, how subjective well-being life satisfaction can affect on intentional mimicry consumption. Particularly, the result chapter of this study examined the role of Instagram activities (interaction, browsing, and broadcasting) as mediators between subjective well-being life satisfaction and intentional mimicry consumption. This chapter discusses the results of the study, addresses the limitation of this study, and suggests direction for future study.

Conclusions and Implications

This study found significant relationship between belongingness and subjective well-being life satisfaction. Belongingness was composed of two factors (social connectedness and social assurance) in this study. Hypothesis 1 proposed that belongingness would have a significant impact on subjective well-being life satisfaction. The results show that social connectedness significantly influence consumers' subjective well-being life satisfaction whereas social assurance is not significantly related. Although social connectedness and social assurance both pertain to belongingness, the result indicated that only social connectedness plays a significant role influencing subjective well-being life satisfaction. This result supports the previous research that social connectedness is a stronger predictor of subjective well-being (Yoon & Lee, 2010). Similarly, researchers asserted that people with the higher levels of social connectedness

at a period of time would have a higher subjective well-being life satisfaction (Jose, Ryan, & Prjor, 2012). This study contributes to the growing body of social connectedness and subjective well-being life satisfaction of consumers. This study also sheds lights to investigating another side of belongingness in the consumer behavior area. Although social assurance is in the same vein of belongingness, the result shows that social assurance has a different influence on subjective well-being life satisfaction. Previous research revealed the contradicting result that social assurance is positively related to psychologically health (Erfani and Abedin, 2016). Particularly, in explaining the sense of belongingness, Lee and Robins (1995) argued that both social connectedness and social assurance are primary factors to understand the complexity of a sense of belongingness. According to their argument, it is evident that both scales (e.g., social connectedness and social assurance) can be utilized as effective instruments to measure complex characteristics of a sense of belongingness. According to Kohut's self-psychology theory, teenagers put a higher priority on social assurance than they do on social connectedness because assurance is similar to attachment. Because this study was conducted with adult consumers, the researcher could not find the significant role of assurance. Considering the previous studies about the role of assurance, this study warrants future study to set a target population to teenager consumers and identify the differences in their social assurance or attachment. Further, this study, in congruence with previous studies, confirmed the impact of different social support regarding the age difference. Most participants in this study were adult consumers participating in economic and social activities. These participants communicated and constructed relationships with others through social activities rather than establishing attachment or

companionship. Further, this study found that social connectedness significantly influenced the quality of adult consumers' lives.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that subjective well-being life satisfaction would have a significant impact on intentional mimicry consumption behavior. The result of this study revealed that the higher level of life satisfaction people had, the more intentional mimicry consumption they performed. Mimicry consumption have been focused on the negative side such as an undesirable behavior caused by peer pressure (Sim, 2005). That is, mimicry consumption can be considered as a buying behavior that might occur under the unstable status or the psychologically undecisive state. As a result of this study, however, participants' level of subjective well-being life satisfaction was positively related to their mimicry consumption behavior. The result may counterfeit the findings of previous studies and contribute to explore mimicry consumption as a buying behavior that might also occur in a positive state of mind. Although mimicry consumption has been conceived as an impulsive buying behavior, often caused by peer pressure, this study found that adult consumers exercised mimicry consumption when they had a higher life satisfaction. This result suggests that adult consumers are not likely to exercise mimicry consumption when they feel unsatisfied and unstable with their lives but tend to mimic and buy the products that they have an interest or have a desire to be alike with the figure. Also, previous studies about mimicry consumptions and general consuming behaviors centered around unconscious mimicry consumption and primarily conducted with an experimental design. However, Ruvio et al., (2013) suggested that researchers should also consider the consumers' awareness when they mimic others' behavior. This study can be an initiative to understand intentional mimicry consumption. Particularly,

the contemporary consumers spontaneously search for the information needed to make an informed decision, future studies should be guided to consider consumers' strategies to obtain resources and information and to investigate consumers' intentional buying behavior. Therefore, another implication of this study is that future studies can be directed to expand the emerging and growing body of studies about intentional/conscious mimicry consumption.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that Instagram activities (interaction, browsing, and broadcasting) would have mediation effect between subjective well-being life satisfaction and mimicry consumption. It is partially supported since only Instagram interaction has a mediation effect. Based on the social comparison theory, buying behavior can be considered the result of social comparison and social media plays a significant as a mediator that guides social comparison. The result of this study shows that interaction through the social media had a significant effect on consumers' buying behavior. Although previous research emphasized on visually-oriented content of Instagram, communication with other users in Instagram is more importantly considered in this study. As illustrated in the result of Hypothesis 1, social connectedness had a significant role to positively influence life satisfaction. This results in Instagram interaction and its mediation effect suggest that people in society are highly influenced by interactions and relationships with others. Particularly, this result yields a meaningful implication for marketing strategies because participants tend to actively incorporate more information while interacting with people than browsing and broadcasting. This finding suggests marketers invest more on utilizing direct and indirect interaction and communication strategies to elicit their purchase decisions than on advertising the product with

provocative posts and photos. Because this study was conducted with adult consumers with buying power, the result of this study provides meaningful directions and potential strategies for the online market. As social media takes a large proportion of the current buying culture, an increasing number of recent studies centers on consumers' motivation and behaviors on social media. This study establishes a foundation for investigating new buying behavior (mimicry consumption) on the new market platform (social media).

Limitation and Future Study

Although this study illustrated significant findings about mimicry consumption, future study is warranted. This section will discuss three limitations identified in this study and conclude with directions and pathway forward for future study.

First, this study has a limitation on population. In data collection phase, the population of this research was targeted to the Instagram consumers, ranging from 18 to 38 years old. Despite the targeted range of study population, the majority of population (76%) was ranging from 25 to 38 as shown in Chapter 4. The congregated data shows that Millennials are relatively less depended on social media (Instagram in this study) than Generation Z. This result implies that Generation Z consumers, aged 18 to 24, may have a different consuming behavior. As identified in this study, a large proportion of participants indicated that they are actively involved in Instagram; however, their usage hours were less than one to two hours. That is, their frequency and usage hours may also have potential impacts on the result because this study specifically investigated the mediating role of Instagram. Therefore, future study should consider collecting targeted

data from college students, or consumers aged from 18 to 24, to compare and contrast the age-depended findings with this study.

Second, this study measured mimicry consumption through survey responses from participants. Because this study utilized survey as the primary research instrument, this study examined intentional mimicry consumption. Acknowledging the potential significance of unconscious mimicry consumption, as identified in previous studies, this study suggests future studies to explore unconscious mimicry consumption in Instagram.

Lastly, this study has a limitation on curbing a list of valid consumptions. This study funneled down the scope of mimicry consumption within cosmetics and fashion products. However, future study should consider extensive list of life-style consumptions in Instagram, such as, office products, sports gears, traveling requisites, and food. This study found that the consumers exercise mimicry consumption, which previous studies conceived as a negative consuming behavior; however, future study should better conceptualize mimicry consumption as a general consuming culture in the contemporary era. Thus, future study should expand the scope of research to encapsulate the variety of mimicry consumptions without setting negative presumptions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Form



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Human Research Protection Program

EXEMPT DETERMINATION

October 9, 2019

Dear [Yoo-Kyoung Seock](#):

On 10/9/2019, the Human Subjects Office reviewed the following submission:

Title of Study:	"What's the motivation of intentional mimicry consumption behavior?" The mediation effect of Instagram activity between motivation and mimicry consumption
Investigator:	Yoo-Kyoung Seock
Co-Investigator:	JeongAh Shin
IRB ID:	PROJECT00001230
Review Category:	DHHS Exempt 2i

We have approved the protocol from 10/9/2019 to 10/8/2024.

Since this study was determined to be "exempt", please be aware that not all future modifications will require review by the IRB. For more information, please see Appendix C of the Exempt Research Policy (<https://research.uga.edu/docs/policies/compliance/hso/IRBExempt-Review.pdf>). As noted in Section C.2, you can simply notify us of modifications that will not require review by using the "Add Public Comment" button on the main study page.

Please close this study when it is complete.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

Commit to Georgia | give.uga.edu
An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution

Appendix B

Consent Form

Informed Consent

What is the purpose of this project?

Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock invites you to participate in a research study. The purpose of this project is to understand consumers' motivation of Instagram usage and shopping behavior. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Participation involves your completion of an online survey that will take about 15 minutes of your time. For your participation, you will receive rewards from Survey Sampling International based on your agreement with them.

Confidentiality

You will not be asked for any identifying information in the survey. The confidentiality of any answers you provide to the survey, including general demographic information such as age and race, will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties. Your responses will be analyzed by members of the study team who are located at the University of Georgia. De-identified data may be shared with other researchers for future research purposes.

Risks

There are no anticipated risks to you. In the survey, you will answer questions about your sport, the possible injuries in that sport, and your awareness of and thoughts on concussions. If you are uncomfortable answering any of these questions, you can stop the survey. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. In fact, the published results will be presented in summary form only. Your identity will not be associated with your responses in any published format.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time by exiting the survey.

Benefits

There are no anticipated benefits to you.

Contact Information

If you have questions about the study, you may contact *Dr. Yoo-Kyoung Seock*, Professor of Merchandising, Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors at the University of Georgia, at yseock@uga.edu. If you are not satisfied with the response of the research team, have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, you should contact The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

Principal Investigator:

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To indicate whether you consent to participating in the research, select one answer below.

Appendix C

Survey

Section 1-Screening Question

Instruction: Please answer the following screening questions about yourself

- 1 Do you have an Instagram account? Yes No

*If you said "yes", please proceed with the following survey.
If you said "no", please do not proceed with the following survey.*

- 2 Are you active on Instagram? Yes No
- 3 How much are you active on Instagram? Not at all Very much
- 4 On average, approximately how many hours do you usually spend on Instagram a day? 1 2 3 4 5
0-1 hour 1-2 hours 2-3 hours 3-4 hours More than 4 hours
- 5 Instagram is part of my everyday activity Strongly disagree Neutral Strongly agree
- 6 Have you mimicked the buying behaviors of the people you follow on the Instagram for fashion and cosmetic items (beauty products)? Yes No

*If you said "yes", please proceed with the following survey.
If you said "no", please do not proceed with the following survey.*

- 7 What were the most frequently mimicked fashion and/or cosmetic items? Please list up to five items.
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Section 2-Consumers' mimicry buying behavior

Instruction: How much have you mimicked the buying behaviors of the people listed below?

- Over the past one year, have you ever bought the same or similar fashion and/or cosmetic products that
- 8 people around me use? 1 2 3 4 5
- 9 people I admire use? 1 2 3 4 5
- 10 celebrities/influencers use? 1 2 3 4 5

Section 3-Instagram activities

Instruction: Please answer the following questions related to your Instagram activities.

		Not at all			Very much
	When I use Instagram, _____				
11	I often comment on or reply to others' posts	1	2	3	4 5
12	I often tag others in posts to share the contents	1	2	3	4 5
13	I often reply to others in my posts	1	2	3	4 5

Instruction: Please open your Instagram app and find the recent comments, tags, replies you have made on Instagram over the past few days. Please take a moment to think about your feelings at the time you left comments, tagged or replied on Instagram.

How did you feel when you commented/tagged/replied on Instagram?

		Not at all			Very much
	When I comment, tag, or reply on Instagram, in general, _____				
14	I felt depressed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
15	I felt sad at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
16	I felt lonely at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
17	I felt happy at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
18	I was in a positive mood at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
19	I felt joyous at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
20	I felt relaxed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
21	I felt delighted at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
22	I felt excited at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
23	I felt cheerful at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
24	I was anxious about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
25	I was worried about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
26	I was restless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
27	I was disturbed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
28	I felt too tired to do anything at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
29	I felt run down at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
30	I felt cheerless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
31	I was pleased .	1	2	3	4 5

		Not at all			Very much
	When you use Instagram, _____				
32	how often do you browse the feed/stories without leaving comments?	1	2	3	4 5
33	How often do you check out others' profiles without leaving comments?	1	2	3	4 5

Instruction: Please take a moment to think about your feelings when you browsed the feed/stories or checked others' profiles without leaving comments on Instagram.

How did you feel while performing these activities on Instagram?

		Not at all			Very much
	When I browsed the feed/stories or check others' profiles without leaving comments on Instagram, in general, _____				
34	I felt depressed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
35	I felt sad at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
36	I felt lonely at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
37	I felt happy at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
38	I was in a positive mood at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
39	I felt joyous at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
40	I felt relaxed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
41	I felt delighted at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
42	I felt excited at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
43	I felt cheerful at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
44	I was anxious about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
45	I was worried about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
46	I was restless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
47	I was disturbed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
48	I felt too tired to do anything at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
49	I felt run down at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
50	I felt cheerless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
51	I was pleased .	1	2	3	4 5

		Not at all			Very much
	When you use Instagram, _____				
52	I post something that is not directed to specific people.	1	2	3	4 5
53	I post/upload something on my profile/story with tagging someone.	1	2	3	4 5
54	I post/upload something on my profile/story without tagging anyone.				

Instruction: Please open your Instagram app and find the recent posts (stories, profiles etc.) you uploaded on your Instagram that were not directed to specific people. Please take a moment to think about your feelings at that time.

How did you feel while doing these activities?

		Not at all			Very much
	When I post/upload something on my profile/story, in general, _____				
55	I felt depressed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
56	I felt sad at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
57	I felt lonely at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
58	I felt happy at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
59	I was in a positive mood at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
60	I felt joyous at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
61	I felt relaxed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
62	I felt delighted at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
63	I felt excited at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
64	I felt cheerful at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
65	I was anxious about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
66	I was worried about something at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
67	I was restless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
68	I was disturbed at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
69	I felt too tired to do anything at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
70	I felt run down at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
71	I felt cheerless at that time.	1	2	3	4 5
72	I was pleased .	1	2	3	4 5

Instruction: Please answer on the following questions related to your experience with the Instagram app.

- 73 Have you ever deleted an Instagram app or account from your phone? Yes No

Instruction: If you said “yes”, please share the reason why you deleted the Instagram app or account.

74. Why did you delete your Instagram app or account at that time?

(Up to 1000 characters)

Sections 4&5-Subjective well-being and belongingness

Instruction: Please click the appropriate box to describe yourself.

	Not at all				Very much
75 In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.	1	2	3	4	5
76 In general, my life conditions are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5
77 I am satisfied with my life.	1	2	3	4	5
78 So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.	1	2	3	4	5
79 I am very content with my life.	1	2	3	4	5
80 I am living my life to the fullest.	1	2	3	4	5
81 If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.					

	Not at all				Very much
Social connectedness/Assurance					
82 When I am with other people, I feel included.	1	2	3	4	5
83 I have a sense of togetherness with people.	1	2	3	4	5
84 I have close bonds with family and friends.	1	2	3	4	5
85 I feel accepted by others.	1	2	3	4	5
86 I feel no distance from people.	1	2	3	4	5
87 I feel connected with others.	1	2	3	4	5

88	I feel more comfortable when someone is constantly with me.	1	2	3	4	5
89	I'm more at ease doing things together with other people.	1	2	3	4	5
90	Working side by side with others is more comfortable than working alone.	1	2	3	4	5
91	My life is incomplete without a buddy beside me.	1	2	3	4	5
92	It's hard for me to use my skills and talents without someone beside me.	1	2	3	4	5
93	I stick to my friends like glue.	1	2	3	4	5
94	I join groups more for the friendship than the activity itself.	1	2	3	4	5
95	I wish to find someone who can be with me all the time.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 6-Demographic Information

96	What is your gender?	Female	Male	Others
97	What is your age?			
98	What is your job status? (You can select more than one option. Ex. Student with part time job)			
	Unemployed	Student		
	Part-time	Full-time		
	Others			
99	How much is your disposable income after paying your bills?	\$ _____/month		
100	What is your residential status			
	a. I reside in	Dormitory	Apartment	House
	b. I live with	Alone	Roommate	Parents
				Spouse