Understanding likes on Instagram Amongst EMU Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the opinion of Eastern Mediterranean University students when it comes to understanding likes on Instagram. The study is based on Uses and Gratification Theory and seeks to explore the extent to which university students understand this concept and what it implies and means to them. As well as how they gratify their needs when using Instagram.

The study employed quantitative methodology. Questionnaire was distributed to 300 students in Eastern Mediterranean University although 277 questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed. The first section of the questionnaire was related to demographic information of participants. The second and third section was related to social media and attitude scale statements respectively.

The study reflects that all participants are users of Social Media and have an Instagram account. It also reflects that the response of people to post have a certain implication to daily lives and is relevant for various reasons.

Further studies can explore using a comparison of Social Media and not just focusing on one in particular. Also, Social media is used not only by students but also by working class for various reasons. So, staff or other persons aside from students can be involved in the next research.

Keywords: social media, instagram, uses and gratification.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesindeki öğrencilerin instagramı anlamak ve beğeni oluşturmak üzerine bir analiz çalışmasıdır. Kullanımlar ve Doyumlar teorisi kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmada instagram kullanan üniversite öğrencilerinin ne ölçüde doyuma ulaştıkları ölçülmektedir. Toplamda 300 öğrenci ile anket çalışması yapılmıştır.

Çalışma, tüm katılımcıların Sosyal Medya kullanıcısı olduklarını ve bir Instagram hesabına sahip olduklarını göstermektedir. Aynı zamanda, insanların görevden uzaklaştırılmalarının günlük hayatta belirli etkileri olduğunu ve çeşitli nedenlerle ilişkili olduğunu yansıtıyor.

Daha ileri çalışmalar salt birine odaklanmanın değil, sosyal medyanın karşılaştırmasını kullanarak keşfedebilir. Ayrıca, sosyal medya yalnızca öğrenciler tarafından değil, çeşitli nedenlerle işçi sınıfı tarafından da kullanılmaktadır. Böylece bir sonraki araştırmaya öğrenciler dışında bir personel ya da diğer kişiler katılabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Instagram, Kullanımlar ve Doyumlar

DEDICATION

**I dedicate this thesis to Almighty God
Praise Be His Name**

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I want to thank the Almighty God for sparing my life and giving me the opportunity to start and complete this awesome phase in my life.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the use of traditional media has reduced in comparison to the use of new media. Traditional media are the likes of radio, newspaper and television while new media represent mostly inventions related with the use of internet. The creation of the internet and the WWW (World Wide Web) has been if not the most important, one of the most important addition for the media in recent times. The creation of the internet has developed a lot of other roots where people not only read some of the newspaper online but people in fact become journalist themselves. In relation to this we speak of social networking sites or social media as they are generally called. Social Networking Sites are created applications on the web or internet that provides a means for people with the same interests or ideology, and activities to interact without being physically present. This is why it is believed that the number of SNSs platforms is on a rapid increase. It is convenient, affordable and flexible. SNS include Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, 2Go etc. SNS has become a very powerful house and tool. It is known for its wide spread of information, entertainment, business promotion, news generation and opinion gathering technic. It has made the world a global village where people relate with other people without knowing or seeing themselves, people know about events that are not even close to their location, and it makes feedback on issues faster and cheaper. Social media barely have gatekeepers and so it has made every individual a journalist. People post about their opinions on issues and other people comment instantly and share ideas as

well. But in as much as it has its advantages it also has its disadvantages. It has created some misleading information's, it has discredited some people and it has persuaded people wrongly.

Two of the most popular SNS are Facebook and Instagram. Facebook launched on the 4th of February 2004 and has five co-founders: Mark Zuckerberg one of the founders as the CEO. Users create a profile online along with their names, information about their education, location, work etc. This shared information enables friends to find them and interact. Facebook is the SNS with the largest number of members. It also provides a platform to connect to other SNS. Instagram launched as an online social networking service i.e. a social medium by Systrom and Krieger in October 2010. The interest of the application developed in just two months with over 1 million users. Currently, millions of photos are shared daily on Instagram and billions of likes are generated by simply double clicking.

1.1 Background of the Study

The use of social media has helped people gain more confidence as it aids communicating with people known and unknown. As well as creating a new profile for one's self. People develop skills thanks to the creation of these sites and they share their skills with the world. The social media aids interpersonal communication as people share information and news amongst one another either through post, messages or even comments. The medium has also been known to improve sales of products. People advertise their products online and this helps reach other people in different geographical locations.

People ultimately depend on social media for entertainment, news, current information on everything especially youths. Before people consider browsing about news they tend to check what is trending on social media and judge the importance of the news based on its level of been talked about on the social media sites.

Systrom and Krieger launched Instagram in October 6th, 2010. The social networking site Instagram helps to share images and videos globally. It aids business in the marketing of their service of goods and their product advertising as well. Videos posted were 15 seconds as at June 2013 but by January 2016 has increased to 60 seconds. It gained over 100 million active users after its launch. The service was acquired by Facebook in April 2012 for about US$1 billion. In 2013, Instagram grew by 23%.

In August 2016, Instagram introduced the Instastory which is like Snapchat. This enables people post but these posts do not appear on their pages but rather their stories. By clicking the profile picture of people their stories are been shown and this posts last for 24 hours. Live videos or pictures are been posted and viewed by people on Instastory. People can send you messages based on your Instastory and comment on what is been posted and you can also view the list of people who have seen your post.

1.2 Motivation of the Study

Social Networking Sites have become a must do for people around the world. Even business partners use it. The video chat from one country to another to save money, time and resources and this helps them get feedback immediately. Students use it to keep up with friends and family and find out about happening events. Countless

number of youths have never picked up a newspaper to read or sat to watch CNN, but when asked about current news and events around the world, they would have more knowledge than the news written in Newspapers or broadcasted on the television station for the day.

They rely on one another for news on SNS. Although this has its disadvantages because some information might be misleading, but people tend to get an idea about the event. Even politicians and musicians and important people in the society are on Social Networking Sites because it is the closest way to keep in touch with people and the world. Some times before certain news is broadcasted on the evening news it has already gone round the world through social networking sites. The world is a global village with SNS. In formation that might hardly be shared on the radio or television on newspaper is been shared on SNS, things relating with the weather or recent meals in different countries or cultural heritage. SNS are used by family and friends as well to keep in touch with each other. SNS makes it easy to communicate with one another and get immediate feedback as long as the individual is online. And now thanks to the availability of internet on campus, at offices etc. People tend to stay logged into their SNS. Smart phones, tablets, androids and IPad also make it easy to be available always.

1.3 Aims and Objective of the Study

This research is developed on the arguments that likes on posts on Instagram says a lot about individuals. The number of likes one gets is related with popularity or likability by other individuals. If one is not getting high number of likes, such person is either unknown or disliked by people.

A lot of researches by media scholars are surrounded around Social Networking Sites (SNS). Instagram is one of the most used SNS and it has a high number of likes and views on videos as well as pictures. Unlike YouTube that has issues with liking a video and making you want to sign in to YouTube first, Instagram is a double tap away from liking a video or image; this makes it easy to like videos or images without having to go through any signing-in procedure. This study aims to understand the concept and significant importance behind likes on Instagram with answers gathered from questionnaires distributed to Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) Students 2016. Objectives include:

- To discover how many students use Instagram;

- To find out how often they use Instagram;

- To explore their opinion about the meaning of likes on post on Instagram;

- To investigate the importance of likes on post on Instagram;

- To determine the importance of comments on post on Instagram.

1.4 Research Questions

This research as stated earlier is focused on Understanding Likes on Instagram amongst Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) Students. The research aims to find answers to the following questions

RQ1: Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?

RQ2: Is there a statistical significant difference as to how male and female respondent like a post on Instagram?

RQ3: What type of picture posted on the timeline or status update is liked on Instagram?

RQ4: What is the significance of the number of likes on a post on the timeline or status update on Instagram?

RQ5: Does the gender of the individual determine your willingness to like the post on the timeline or status update on Instagram?

RQ6: Does the time of the post on the timeline or status update determine the number of likes on Instagram?

RQ7: What gets more attention; likes or comments on a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is important because it shows how often people interact daily as well as the level of interaction. Shows the level at which the world is a global village with some of their interactions being with people they barely know or people in other parts of the world. A lot of people judge their lives based on Social Networking Sites (SNS). They tend to develop themselves or pretend to be who they are not on this sites with the aim of being popular or feeling special.

Some people create fake profiles and use it to express their true selves or just create it for purpose of been unidentified. Some people judge based on the number of followers or likes one has and tag that individual as important or less important. This research aims at identifying and distinguishing self-worth in real life events and self-worth in unrealistic events. The study would help to be an eye opener to the meaning of likes and comments and determine the importance of this likes as well. It would also help share the opinion of people amongst themselves.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This investigation focuses on Students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) for the duration of 3-4 months. The study was conducted amongst 300 active students from different faculties and as a result, results cannot be generalized. It is also limited to only students that have Instagram accounts and are familiar with social networking sites.

The study also did not take into consideration the type of Instagram account; private or public account.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This branch reviews some important literatures that are relevant and related to the present study. The history of the internet would be explained and certain important details relating to the study as well, like, social networking sites, Instagram and also the effects of these sites and the internet as a whole in the society and in daily human lives. Uses and gratification theory would be used as the theoretical framework.

2.1 History of the Internet

When discussing the internet, series of questions can be asked; who is the internet? What is the internet? How does it function? When asked, the question seems simple but it is not as easy as it sounds. The Internet unlike various technologies can be what it is decided to be made of by the user. It can be molded or reshaped for our various use. But most importantly, we can use it to connect people, communities, and countries around the world. Simply put, the internet is a global network connecting millions of computer together.

Over 100 countries are connected into exchange of data, opinions, news as well as business. The Internet can be said to be a representative amongst the most successful examples of the benefits of technological growth and real life information development infrastructure.

The Internet is not the same with WWW (World Wide Web). The Internet has changed the computer and communications system. The invention of the telephone, radio, and telegraph set the stage for this unprecedented integration of capabilities. The Internet is a massive network of networks, a type of connected structures. It connects millions of laptops, desktops and computers together round the world linking a network that can be reached out to another computer provided there is access to the internet. While the World Wide Web, is a system or information space that aids the allocating of information using the internet. It can be said to be an information dissemination device that depends on the internet. Online services are centrally controlled by design but the Internet is decentralized. The host, which is each internet computer, is independent.

Although the internet gives a lot of youths distraction from a lot of daily activities. Youths tend to be so engaged while using the internet that they lack social relations and have low mental and social well-being. After years of its invention, advantages and disadvantages have been discovered.

2.1.1 Mobile Phones

April 3, 1973 marked the invention of the world's first mobile. Other companies began to produce mobile phones not too long after. Motorola began the trend and released its initial commercial mobile in 1983 which was recognized as the Motorola DynaTAC 8000X.

In the very early days of the mobile phones creation, they were not designed for the average man. They were created for the business type of men and they would cost a fortune to obtain. Back then, mobile phones were designed with the likes of business men in mind, businessmen-types that drove expensive cars. At the beginning of the

1990s this was still the case. Nokia's first 'handheld' mobile phone was the Mobira Cityman 900. 1990 to 1995 represents an improvement in the technological advances of the design of this mobiles and their been easy to carry around with individuals and their weight as well. By the late-1990s, mobile devices were rapidly becoming the norm thanks to the invention of the following mobiles: Nokia (1997), Motorola (1997), BlackBerry (1999) and Nokia 3310 (2000) amongst few. The BlackBerry 850 was the first handheld handset released under the BlackBerry brand. Decades later, RIM would be crowned the fastest developing company in the world.

Telecommunication devices are no longer for making or receiving calls. Various telecommunication devices carry various features. While some have 3-4 major features, some have above that. The features of the mobile phone depend on the model of the mobile itself. All mobile phones can make and receive calls as well as disseminate information through SMS or text messages, but not all can send multimedia messages or browse or be connected to the internet. Some can play game and take pictures or make videos but not all. The model or specification of the mobile determines the uses and its features.

With technological advancement and development of mobile technology, communication has been made easy between users on social networking sites and uses of Instagram has been on a high increase. According to Petrič, Petrovčič, and Vehovar (2011):

> with the rapid diffusion and the continuing development of mobile phone and Internet services, these technologies have been adopted by a large part of the population, thus playing an ever more important role as media for everyday interpersonal communication in contemporary societies" (p. 117).

2.1.2 Wireless Network Connection

A mobile phone is a moveable telecommunication device that is electronic, regularly called a phone or cellular. Mobile phones make use of satellite transmission of radio waves to link with wireless communications network. Mobile phones provide Short Message Service (SMS), voice communicator and Multimedia Message Service (MMS). Emergency services can also be linked using wireless networks to communicate effectively such as the police or the hospital. People also use the wireless networks to distribute data fast in small offices or buildings and sometimes around the world.

2.2 History of Social Networking Sites

As the World Wide Web continues to evolve, the usage pattern of Internet surfers has shifted from that of passive readings to active building of contents, illustrating the user-centric, interactive, and collaborative nature of Web 2.0 (Sharma, 2008). Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other. Social Networking Sites (SNS) has become popular not just amongst the youth but also amongst adults. Nielsen (2009) showed that social networking sites have overtaken personal email and become the fourth most popular Internet activities, following search, portals, and PC software applications. Sites are been used to keep in touch with friends, family, business partners as well as for news, education, information and entertainment purpose. According to Forrester Research, 75% of Internet surfers used ''Social Media'' in the second quarter of 2008 by joining social networks, reading blogs, or contributing reviews to shopping sites; this represents a significant rise from 56% in 2007.

Today, social networking site is a term that everyone knows. Even the most remote areas of the world have at least heard of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram or even Twitter, and are probably using them on a regular basis. Although this is a recent development as technology was not this developed decades ago. Social media, in its present form, has been around a relatively short term and even though we probably can't imagine living without it now, except for the last few decades, everyone did. Different definitions can be found for social networking sites but simply put, 'it is primarily internet based tool used for sharing and discussing information'. The most captivating key in social networking site is the 'interactive' section. Where people can comment their opinion and share their thoughts. While social media is a generic term covering different online platforms with various attributes, communication formats, and sociability functions, there are certain characteristics that all social media applications fundamentally share. Mayfield (2008) identified five specific characteristics that underline the operations of all social media: participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectedness.

Social media is collaborative media creation of content and then the sharing of this through public platforms or semi-private platforms that have a group of subscribed users (Collins, Rahilly, Richardson and Third, 2011). Visual and verbal content going viral on social media platforms is causing relatively unknown people to be "named and shamed" for their views, thoughts, attitudes and actions that they are engaging with on their own social media sites. Of late, the media has been awash with headlines that are highlighting and challenging individuals' personal social media networks because of socially unacceptable human behaviour in these socially active media spaces on the parts of these individuals and this information then goes viral.

We define social network sites as web-based services that enable people to create profiles, make connections with people of their own choosing, meet people and also enlarge their contact scope. The nature of these connections may differ depending on the site. Social networking is an online service linked with the internet used for developing a relationship between people who might share the same interest, likes, history or activity. These sites allow the creation of profile used to represent individuals and shows their hobbies, dislikes, history, information, likes and interest.

The initial social media site first created was website called Six Degrees. Its name was derived from the ''six degrees of separation'' theory and it is said to have lasted for about 4 years within year 1997 to 2001. From there, the internet evolved into the time of blogs and instant messaging (IM). Even though blogs are not precisely social media, it can be considered so because people are able to communicate instantly.

Around 100 million individuals had access to the internet by the year 2000 and engaging on social media became a daily activity. The initial stage was just a hobby for individuals but as time passed it became a place to meet people, start intimate relationships, discuss political or economic issues and share individual ideas. After the invention of blogging, social media began to explode in popularity. Sites like MySpace and LinkedIn gained prominence in the early 2000s. YouTube was developed in 2005 and this was a new and interesting way to share videos globally. Not long after, Facebook started to lead the global social networking pack. It was founded by university students in Harvard. It was launched in 2004 as a Harvard-only exercise for the students on campus for two years before it was then opened publicly in 2006.

Social media has dominated the world as it it accessible to everyone with access to computer, internet and who understands how it can be used. It can be used to write notes and make post, upload pictures and videos and communicate with more than one person at the same time. Recently, we are witnessing a number of social media sites that allow ordinary citizens to communicate with people. This communication has been made easy through the use of mobile phones; with a mobile phone anywhere in the world with coverage anyone can access the internet and that implies anyone can be on social media. In such conditions, we can imagine the predicaments of figuring out the varied impacts of such communication tools.

Social media today consists of thousands of social media platforms, some serving alike but different purposes. Some social media platforms are more popular than some and have more users than some. For example, Twitter helps to share information faster than some social media sites, it tells what is trending and rapidly that information goes round globally. Instagram on the other hand has to do with pictures. Today, there are a lot of social media sites and many with various features. This enables people each a wide range of people without having to meet personally and also keeps them connected with recent developments. Social media has become addictive for a lot of people. People wake up and go online before even brushing their teeth or eating breakfast.

Social media allow people to build social networks using internet applications that provide users with a variety of exchange platforms (Nadeem, 2012; Wang, 2012). This has led to an explosive growth of social media posts. For organizations, the rapid development of social media brings not only insights into customer opinions and new ways to spread their own viewpoint (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2012), but also

rapid diffusion of possibly unexpected topics, such as negative electronic word-of-mouth messages (Zhang, Jansen, & Chowdhury, 2011). Nowadays, the universal use of social media has become apriority in order to improve organizational performance and enhance communications with users (Fan, Geddes, & Flory, 2013). Social media may strengthen organizations' ability to reach a large audience. However, alongside opportunities,social media interaction also brings challenges, e.g. "the advent of consumer-generated content and its rapid diffusion takes much of the control over messages away" (Farshid, Plangger, & Nel, 2011, p. 228).

2.2.1 About Instagram

Instagram was bound to be a success. In barely 3months of its launch, it had over 1 million active users. Instagram is a mobile application that enables one showcase ones events or life through images to the world. Pictures and videos can be posted and captions can be written for emphasis or explanation of the pictures. The images and videos shared can be edited or filtered which would give the image a better view or enable it look like a professional picture. Instagram also took social network sharing and made it easier by giving users a convenient way to instantly share a picture on several platforms, all from one app.

Instagram, was created in 2010 and it derives its name from the putting together of "telegram" and "instant camera". Instagram was invented by two people namely Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. It started as a free mobile app in October 2010. Starting with one million monthly users, the photo-sharing app found itself with 100 million uploaded photos by July 2011 and above 8 million users in September of that same year. In less than a year the application had over 30 million users. The rapid rate of its popularity grew, with over 100 million active users as of April 2012 and over 300 million as of December 2014. Due to its rapid development it was noticed

by Facebook and bought for $1 billion. From that day onward, use of Instagram increased tremendously. It reached 80 million monthly users after the acquisition and nearly doubled by the end of 2013.

In May of 2013, Instagram introduced a feature called photo tagging and "Photos of You,". This makes one upload a picture and tag as many people as the individual requires. This feature has been said to help grow business. It can be used by another individual to tag someone else in another person's picture thus creating awareness of that image. It can be an advert picture or a need for votes or just something for entertainment. . At the end of 2013, Instagram also added private chat room popularly known as DM for users to send private photos and videos to each other and have private conversations as well.

Early 2014, a report carried out by Global Web Index determined Instagram as the fastest growing social network. Few months after that, reports generated that Instagram toped Twitter with active mobile users; the photo-sharing app helped increase the number of users by almost 5 million more users than those active on the twitter application.

Instagram as a social networking site tends to create a certain ego in individuals. It creates the impression that reality should create with achievement of goals. For Instagram users, when high numbers of likes are obtained, it becomes a way of establishing self-validation and self-worth amongst. It increases their ego and confidence. Users of social media networks believe that their "virtual profiles" are accurate representatives of themselves, eliminating the spatial need of interpersonal communication (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2006, p. 168).

Instagram has some certain characteristics including the hashtag trend, tagging, instastory, live feed and mentions. It also includes liking a comment and replying specific comments on post. Location tags are also available, sending a post to 1 or more users at the same time is available, and picture filters are present as well. A page is available also called explore; this page is not related to people you directly follow rather it shows pictures and videos of pages you might have checked out at some point in time, trends, and posts relating to highest number of likes from for followers.
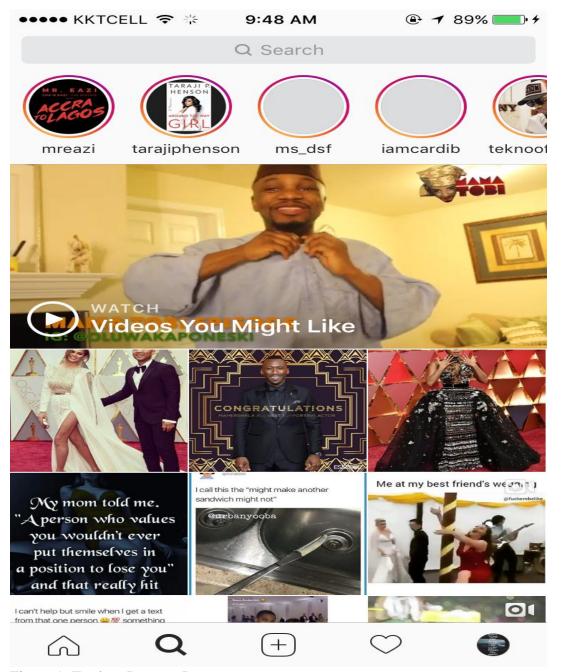
Figure 1: Explore Page on Instagram

Because of the need to develop self-worth on social media sites, users tend to leave moral out the window. A lot of female users have nude post as a result of seeking attention. Even the male users as well. Post are not linked with ethics or culture anymore, they are posted for the sake of increase in likes and attention gathering.

2.3 Effects of Social Networking Sites on Human Daily Lives

Social media is being expanded to the extent that everyone, who has access to computer, internet and who is skilled in using it, has the chance to easily access, upload/write and transmit messages and meet some common goals. Now, we are witnessing a number of social media sites that allow ordinary citizens to communicate with people, even with mobile phones, who share something in common (usually), everywhere in the world, fast and efficient. In such conditions, we can imagine the predicaments of figuring out the varied impacts of such communication tools. With the continuous rise of Social Networking Sites, users are becoming more addicted by the day especially with mobile gadgets i.e phones, ipads etc. Although Social Networking Sites has its benefits, it also has its disadvantages. We all must have realized the impact of social media by now, it affects our cultures, our businesses, our ideology and even our morals. Social media has revolutionized the way individuals relate with each other and how they socialize generally.

Consumers' online behavior is developing at a rapid rate. Consumers are taking part in a variety of activities ranging from consuming content, business transactions, participating in discussions, meeting people and sharing knowledge with other consumers to contributing to other consumers' activities. Social media activities can be divided into three categories depending on the motivation for the activity: 1) Information processing, 2) entertainment activities, and 3) social connection.

Frequently, consumers were looking for specific information, such as facts or explanations for something. The findings from research carried out then indicate that user-created services play an important role in conveying experiences and peer-to-

peer support. By sharing experiences and knowledge, consumers are creating new forms of services, which have an important task in guiding and directing decision making. Also consumers go online now as a form of expanding their business. Since most people are regularly online and barely frequent traditional media, what better way to develop your business or make it known if not through social media?

According Steven Strogatz from Cornell University, social media sites can make it more difficult for us to distinguish between the meaningful relationships we foster in the real world, and the numerous casual relationships formed through social media. By focusing so much of our time and energy on these less meaningful relationships, our most important connections, he fears, will weaken. The immediacy provided by social media is available to predators as well as friends. Kids especially are exposed to cyber-bullying in which the innocent children are victimized and terrorized before their peers and these. The devastation of these online attacks can leave deep mental scars and has led some children to commit suicide and murder. Social networking sites foster openness about private life and encourage people to go public with it.

Social media has become a huge part of our daily lives. Most people engage in social media activities without considering the effects of certain steps they take, the strangers they meet and the dangers involved in giving too much information about their private lives. People are more concerned about what their online friends think about them than what their face to face friends think. Youths spend so much time on social media and sometimes have difficulty being who they are. They create fake status sometimes or end up building confidence through social media but not in their reality.

Internet addiction can be termed as an internet use that causes problem in one's social, mental, psychological, and even education or work life. Individuals tend to get addicted to the internet and some even do not make progressive use of it. They do not check for latest news update or even relate with friends and family. Rather, they involve themselves with strangers or are addicted to posting a status or picture and keep checking for internet-related affairs. This distracts them from daily human activities and makes them less social. The internet provides a means for people to escape from reality. Either from work problems, family affairs, education or emotional stress.

2.4 Theoretical Frame Work

This research applied Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) as it relates with humans needs, the satisfaction derived from media use and how the media is being used. Also diffusion of innovation theory was chosen as it is a set of generalizations regarding the typical spread of innovations within a social system.

2.4.1 History of Uses and Gratification Theory

Uses and gratification theory first began in the 1940's. It is a theory developed to explain mass communication. The theory postulates that the audience is as active as the sender. Researchers started to trace connections using this theory in radio participants. Research carried out in mass communication and mass media were relating to topics developed from scholars with a social psychological orientation who have studied the effects of media in relation to people's attitude formation and attitude change. Other scholars concerned themselves with the text people extract from the media and how it satisfies their needs. Investigations initially were concerned with information regarding events such as children's use of comics and also the absence of newspapers during a newspaper strike. During this period, mental

meaning began to emerge. Its strong growth was determined by theorist research and also previous communication theories.

The first research on uses and gratification was in 1944 by Herta Herzog. Media served certain functions for both the people and society: correlation, surveillance, entertainment and cultural transmission. Wilbur Schramm in 1952 developed the fraction of selection: a formula in which the forms of mass media which an individual would use can be determined. The formula helps to predict the amount of gratification an individual expects to gain from the medium i.e. whatever media is chosen, over the amount of effort or energy been used to acquire the gratification. Although, Chaim Eyal (personal communication, 1994) points out that uses and gratifications theory can be said to stem from the work of Raymond Bauer in the 1960s.

Since the invention and continuous increase of social media and technology as a whole, there has been a shift from traditional media to new media. Even the traditional media are engaged into new media currently. Users prefer the new media especially as they can share their ideas as well to information been disseminated and they can filter what they want to read or listen to rather than having to go through the entire information before getting the exact information they want. Therefore, Uses and Gratification Theory lets people do what they want and not what the media want them to do. Uses and Gratification theory is not a passive audience approach, rather it is an active audience approach which means it does not simply accept the text from the media. Audiences ask questions and develop their own interpretation. They also have the power to decide to not listen to the media text. They generate their own

interpretation from educational background, cultural influences, experiences in life and family upbringing as well.

Individuals take with UGM in different ways for different purposes: they consume contents for information, entertainment, and mood management needs; they participate through interacting with the content as well as with other users for stimulating social connections; and they produce their own contents for self-expression and self-actualization, to gain identity, to experience the beauty, to affirm spiritual values, to participate in history, to believe in love or even to reinforce belief in justice.. In distinguishing between two social media and their uses, difficulty is involved especially as each medium has it specific need and can appeal to different audience in different ways. In analyzing the business growth rate of Instagram and Facebook, the number of users has to be identified as well as selected examples.

As human beings we consume media in so many ways. We allocate the consumption of different media whether traditional or new in different ways as we all have different aims for its consumption and a variety of media. This simply means that we will not choose the same medium.

Uses and gratification theory (UGT) takes a look at how and why people choose to consume media, the choices they make to select the necessary media that feeds their specific need. UGT is focused on what people do with the media and not what the media does to people. UGT uses communication as being socially and psychologically constrained, meaning individual difference and choice for medium are affected by expectations, attitudes, activity and involvement. This theory sets to

explain that even in our subconscious mind, we select media text for a reason. The theory suggests that our minds are not mindless towards media usage; there is always a reason for selecting a media.

A number of theorists argue that individuals use the media in their own ways to resist forces of dominance and control coming from government agencies or those who control the media (Chris Powelland George E.C. Paton, Humor in Society: Resistance and Control (1998)). When asked the question of why do you listen to the radio or read a certain newspaper? Some individuals would respond with 'to kill time' but why can't time be killed while reading a fashion magazine or listening to a musical station on the radio rather than political news? Truth is, in our unconscious state uses and gratifications been applied and it affects our decisions. We just might not be able to tell why.

McQuails four main category of gratifications are

   a. Diversion

       Emotional release or escape from problems or constraints of routines.

   b. Personal relationships

       Social utility and Companionship.

   c. Personal identity

       Reality exploration, value reinforcement and personal reference.

   d. Surveillance

       The need for information relating with the world we live in and our environment.

2.4.2 Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Diffusion of innovation theory simply put is the spread of a fire. Diffusion is said to be the process by which an innovation is mentioned through specific channels over time among the members of a social system. Given that decisions are not authoritative or collective, each member of the social system faces his/her own innovation-decision that follows a 5-step process:

A. Knowledge – this involves knowing the created innovation and how it is said to function.
B. Persuasion – person either like or dislike the newly created innovation.
C. Decision – person engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation.
D. Implementation – person make use of the innovation
E. Confirmation – person calculate the results of an innovation-decision already made.

Adoption of a newly generated idea is determined by interpersonal human interaction over time. Initial adopters of the innovation discuss it with about two members of a particular social system, and they become the adopters of the innovation. In due time, the spread of the innovation becomes a binomial expansion. Innovation distribution is said to be in five categories namely the innovators, the early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

Innovators are curious and always eager to experiment on new ideas. Their love of interest in new ideas leads them to a local circle of peers and into social relationship more rooted than normal. The early adopters are filled with the greatest degree of opinion leaders in social systems. They are the information and advice providers to other adopters about a new idea. The early adopter is usually respected by his or her peers and has a reputation for successful and discrete use of new ideas (Rogers 1971).

The early majority groups interact frequently with peers but are not found holding

leadership positions. The late majority are skeptical groups when it comes to

embracing new ideas in a social system. They might adopt the idea based on

economic necessity or in response to pressure from peers. Laggard on the other hand

are traditionalist. They only want ideas that relate with what they have always known

from generations in the past. They are more likely to be suspicious of not just the

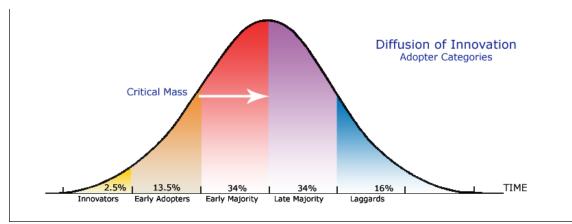innovation but more of the change agents and innovators as well (Roger 1971).

Figure 2: Diffusion of innovation model

Studying how innovation occurs, E.M. Rogers (1995) argued that it consists of four

stages: invention, diffusion (or communication) through the social system, time and

consequences. An idea is invented, it is communicated through social systems, it

goes viral over time and whatever this idea or innovation is, it has consequences;

effects of its existence.

2.5 Social Media and Theories

SNSs are forms of virtual community, with various sites catching the attention of

millions of users globally, many of whom apply the use of these social networking

sites to their daily lives and routines. These sites are founded on the bases of bond

creation, strength and consistency. It can surface with already connected members of

a social orientation of connecting people with similar linked beliefs. UG theory is the study of the gratifications or benefits that attract and hold audiences to various types of media and the types of content that satisfy their social and psychological needs (O'Donohoe, 1994; Cantril, 1942).

Whilst researchers traditionally intended to emphasize the effects of media exposure on audiences, UGT adopts the need to consider what people do with media. UGT uses communication as being socially and psychologically constrained, meaning individual difference and choice for medium are affected by expectations, attitudes, activity and involvement. UGT can be said to be a user-centered approach. During the communication system process, people make reference to interactive mediums for information because some discuss events that they have seen or read in print or electronic media. More knowledge is gained in the process of interaction while using media as reference.

Internet users in general have contributed to the creation and dissemination of news by interacting through social media online practices. In fact, 59% said they were exposed to more news and information from their SNS (Hermida et al., 2012). This rapid ability for users to disseminate breaking news may have personal opinions and should be studied in relation to the knowledge users believe they obtain through their "social circles." The idea of friend posted news brings their personal views and habits to comment on topics and engage with those of similar and opposing viewpoints. Research indicates that personalities such as extroversion and introversion are displayed while interactive online (Kim, Hsu, & Zuniga, 2013). A SNS is a place of self-expression, yet it is also a place of reciprocity. This can come in many forms through everyday social media practices such as responding to a

friend request, acceptance of an invitation, liking a friends photo, and tagging those who appear in them (Vallor, 2011).

Diffusion of innovations theory is used to explain adoption of social media (Instagram) among EMU students. According to Rogers (2003), adoption decision is different from implementation decision and institutionalization. Individuals adopt the use of Instagram and implement it in our daily lives.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature review underlines related work and research in the area of social media relating with understanding likes on Instagram. This research employed quantitative methodology and this chapter explains the detailed methodology on how the research is carried out.

3.1 Research Methodology

Anderson (1996), 'the unit of analysis of quantitative research is quantity'. Quantitative Research is applied used to quantify the problem by way of gathering numerical information or information that can be translated into useable statistics. It can be a measurement tool for opinions, ideas, behaviors, and various other variables. And generalize results from a larger sample population. Frequencies, amounts, values or degrees are used by researchers to represent communication phenomena. Quantitative Research uses quantified data to develop facts and unveil patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more organized than Qualitative data collection methods.

Deductive reasoning is the primary foundation of quantitative research; researchers pick a theory and the truth of the theory is been tested and determined. This simply implies that it flows from a generalized theory to a specific research conclusion. Quantitative data collection methods include various forms of surveys – online

surveys, paper surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, website interceptors, etc.

Quantitative research is more objective, can use statistics to generalize a result, it recodifies a complicated problem to a narrow number of variables. It also looks at relationships between variables and can establish cause and effect in highly controlled circumstances. Quantitative research is the systematic empirical investigation of noticeable events through mathematical, computer generated or statistical illustration. The research methodology was right for the research because it helps calculate recovered data given to participants systematically. Quantitative research asks broad questions and collects word data. The researcher identifies the information in themes and patterns exclusive to that set of participants.

Quantitative research deals in numbers, logic, and an objective stance.

3.2 Research Design

This research is a case study involving EMU students during the 2016 fall semester. Questionnaires were organized and distributed amongst EMU students who understood English language and had an Instagram account. Questionnaire was used for the following reasons;

- ❖ They are easy to understand and analyze.
- ❖ They are recognized by library staff and managers.
- ❖ It is affordable for a large sample or population.
- ❖ They are easy to distribute.
- ❖ The format is familiar to most respondents

The research employed a case study research. Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single person, group of people, an event or community. Typically, data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods.

The aim was to analyze the data and get the required and accurate result within the required time.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

The research was directed at how EMU students understood the concept of liking a post on Instagram. Questionnaire was the administered instrument for collection of data. The questionnaire was in three categories; the demographic section, the obtaining of knowledge to confirm usage of Instagram and the last section was the Likert scale which was used to acquire their opinion towards the research.

The questionnaire was distributed amongst 300 EMU students. Students were not selected specifically from any department. Questionnaire was distributed in the library. All the information was gotten and calculated using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software to facilitate the analysis.

3.4 Population and Sampling

The research population involved students of Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU), Famagusta, Cyprus. The university has 141 programs (11 Faculties and 5 Schools). With over 20000 students from 106 countries, a sample of 300 students was used in the study. Questionnaire was distributed amongst students who have Instagram account and their relative department was not asked. Questionnaire was distributed in the Library, Dormitories and in Faculties.40 questionnaires was distributed in the dormitories during the summer and when the school resumed the remaining 250 questionnaires was distributed in the library and at Faculties.

Convenience sampling was used in the selecting of participants. There are two kinds of convenience sampling, the weak version and the strong version. Questionnaire

was distributed mostly during the holiday and this implies that students were rarely available except students who did not travel and students that were involved in the on-going summer school. The remaining questionnaire was distributed when the session began. 'Weak´ convenience sampling was administered. It is where sample units or clusters are selected simply because they are nearest to hand.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

This research was navigated during the fall semester in year 2016. Questionnaire was distributed amongst 300 university students in Eastern Mediterranean University although only 277 were retrieved. Only 277 results were recovered because some students left the library before the questionnaires could be collected. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS program.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Information derived through measurements that are not valid is insignificant data. Measurement has validity to the extent that it measures what you want it to measure and not something else (Katzer, Cook, & Crouch, 1978). Neuman, 2003, 'a research becomes valid when it is truthful, seems real and states how an idea conforms to reality.

A pilot study was carried out amongst few students from the university in the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies. Majorities were international students and the test helped to increase the validity of the study.

Reliability is expressed as a matter of degree. The degree of permanence, credibility and steadiness of the measurement is its reliability. This research work's reliability was verified with Cronbach alpha. Cronbach alpha 0.79 signifies the reliability of the

measuring device and this is evidence in the table shown below that this research is reliable with (.70).

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	No of items
.70	20

Both the research question and the questionnaire were checked by the supervisor before it was distributed to participants in the Institution.

The questionnaire was grouped into 3 parts; the demographic questions, questions about social media and the attitude of the students through a Likert scale respectively. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Chapter four branch contains the information gathered from the questionnaire distributed amongst 300 students in the University although only 277 results were obtained. This chapter shows the analysis derived from the accumulation of the questionnaire. It describes the statistical result in three stages respectively: demographic information, social media and five point Likert scale questions respectively.

4.1 Analysis of Questions on Demographics Information

Presentationon information developed from inquiries of demographic questions such participant's age, sex, nationality and program of study are answered in this section.

Table 2: Participants' Gender

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	164	59.2	59.2	59.2
	Female	113	40.8	40.8	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 2, Out of a population of 277 participants, 164 participants are men and 113 are women. It reveals that the male populations are a majority in the

participants' gender for this research even though the questionnaire was distributed randomly to students. The male population is the larger contributors of opinion to the results of the research.

Table 3: Participants' Nationality

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cypriot	27	9.7	9.7	9.7
	Turkish	33	11.9	11.9	21.7
	Nigerian	82	29.6	29.6	51.3
	Others	135	48.7	48.7	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows that 27 (9.7%) participants are Cypriots, 33(11.9%) participants are Turkish, 82 (29.6%) are Nigerians and 135 are from totally different countries aside the three mentioned. Other countries include Iran, Pakistan, and Cameroon etc. The population of the respondents is important because it reveals the culture of the larger participants. The questionnaire cannot contain each country of students in the university and so they were grouped.

Table 4: Participants educational status

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Undergraduates	240	86.6	86.6	86.6
	Masters	31	11.2	11.2	97.8
	PhD	6	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 represents the Program of study of participants. 240 participants are Undergraduates, 31 participants are Masters Students and 6 participants are PHD students. Undergraduates are said to have more free time on their hands compared to Masters and PHD students.

Table 5: Participants' Age

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-20	57	20.6	20.6	20.6
	21-24	149	53.8	53.8	74.4
	25-28	71	25.6	25.6	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 describes the age of participants. Out of a total population of 277 participants who participated in the research, 57 participants who make up 20.6% are between ages 17-20 years, 149 participants who make up 53.8% are between the ages of 21-24 years while 71 participants who make up 25.6% are between the ages of 25-28 years.

4.2 Analysis of Questions on Social Media

Section explains the questions aimed at discovering the level of accessibility of Social Media and the reason for its usage.

Table 6: Which of these social media sites do you visit regularly?

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Instagram	47	17.0	17.0	17.0
	Facebook	72	26.0	26.0	43.0
	Twitter	30	10.8	10.8	53.8
	All	128	46.2	46.2	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 6 indicate that 47 participants who make up 17.0% use Instagram frequently, 72 participants who make up 26.0% use Facebook frequently, 30 participants who make up 10.8% use Twitter frequently and 128 participants who make up 46.2% use all the listed Social Media.

Table 7: How frequent do you visit Instagram?

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Am always logged in	87	31.4	31.4	31.4
	3-5 hours a day	63	22.7	22.7	54.2
	8-10 hours a day	33	11.9	11.9	66.1
	Once in a while	94	33.9	33.9	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 7 indicate 87 participants who make up 31.4% are always logged in, 63 participants who make up 22.7% are logged in 3-5 hours a day, 33 participants who make up 11.9% are logged in 8-10 hours a day while 94 participants who make up 33.9% are logged in once in a while.

Table 8: What makes you visit Instagram?

		Occurrence	Percentage	Accurate Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Valid	availability of internet	80	28.9	28.9	28.9
	boredom	85	30.7	30.7	59.6
	leisure	88	31.8	31.8	91.3
	educational purpose	24	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 8 indicates that 80 participants visit Instagram as a result of availability of internet, 85 participants visit Instagram due to boredom, 88 participants visit Instagram for leisure while 24 participants visit Instagram due to Educational purposes.

4.3 Analysis based on Attitude Scale Statements

The next section involves the use of Likert scale to explain participants Understanding of Likes on Instagram. The method of calculating their opinion which is determined by their attitude includes a choice of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Decided and Strongly Undecided. Quantifying the opinion of participants

in the attitudal scale questions is measured using Strongly Agree-(4.20-5.0), Agree (3.40-4.19), Undecided (2.60-3.39), Disagree (1.80-2.59) and Strongly Disagree (1-1.79). this is in accordance with recommendation of Balca (2004).

Information gathered show that participants virtually are Undecided about statements made. Amongst 24 statements, participants are undecided about 17 statements while 6 statements are disagreed upon, only 1 statement is agreed upon.

Table 9: Means and attitude of respondents' perception on understanding likes on Instagram.

Statements	Means	Attitude
Posts are liked because friends are online.	2.83	U
A high number of likes signify that the person is liked amongst people.	2.62	U
Posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like post back.	2.41	D
Only friends like each other's post on Instagram.	3.41	A

Selfies are liked more than any other post.	2.87	U
Post are liked only during the day.	3.37	U
Posts are liked only at night.	3.34	U
Posts are liked more when there is free access to internet.	2.41	D
Likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender.	2.71	U
Liking a post shows interest in that individual.	2.72	U
Likes are appreciated more than comments on post.	2.77	U
Commenting on a post indicates interest in that individual.	2.66	U
High number of likes on a post indicates popularity.	2.60	U
Low number of likes on a post indicates low number	3.02	U

of friends.		
Posts relating to couples are liked just as much as personal selfies.	2.76	U
Posts on relationships are not liked.	3.33	U
Posts are not liked out of jealousy.	2.96	U
Likes are higher on a post during the weekend.	2.55	D
Likes are higher on a post during the weekday.	3.11	U
Seminude pictures posted have a high number of likes.	2.49	D
Nude pictures increase likes on post.	2.62	U
Fashionable posts have high number of likes.	2.10	D
Posts are liked randomly.	2.63	U
Posts are liked relating to the status of individuals in the society.	2.23	D

The table above illustrates the mean and attitudes of participants in regards to their understanding of likes on Instagram. Their decisions are mostly undecided or disagree about the sentences written in the questions.

Participants only agreed on the statement that only friends like each other's post on Instagram.

Majority were undecided about been liked because friends are online, that a high number of likes signifies the person is liked amongst people, liking a post shows interest in that individual, likes are appreciated more than comments on posts, and that likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender. Participants are also undecided about post relating to couples been liked as much as selfies, high number of likes indicating popularity and post not been liked during the weekday. Posts been liked randomly and post of nude pictures been liked are also undecided. Post on relationship are been liked and post are not liked out of jealousy.

While few participants disagree with the statements that posts are liked when there is free access to internet, also that likes are higher on a post during the weekend and that posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like back. Participants also disagree with the statements that fashionable posts have high number of likes, posts are liked relating to the status of the individual in the society and that seminude posts have a high number of likes.

This then implies that participants do not agree with most of the statements provided by the researcher. They were either indecisive about the statements or disagreed with the statements. Out of 17 statements that were undecided, 13 statements were towards disagreeing. This is because according to their mean, they are below 2.99.

This can be supported in relation to 13 undecided statements which are; 2.83, 2.62, 2.87, 2.71, 2.72, 2.66, 2.60, 3.02, 2.76, 2.96, 2.62, and 2.63. Also, 4 undecided statements were towards agree. This is because their mean is above 2.99. They include; 3.37, 3.34, 3.33 and 3.11.

Table 10: Post are liked because of friends are online

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	30	10.8	10.8	10.8
	agree	102	36.8	36.8	47.7
	undecided	57	20.6	20.6	68.2
	disagree	60	21.7	21.7	89.9
	strongly disagree	28	10.1	10.1	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table displays that 102 participants agree with the statement 'posts are liked because friends are online'. Minority strongly disagree with 28 participants.

Table 11: A high number of likes signify that the person is liked amongst people

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	34	12.3	12.3	12.3
	agree	115	41.5	41.5	53.8
	undecided	62	22.4	22.4	76.2
	disagree	53	19.1	19.1	95.3
	strongly disagree	13	4.7	4.7	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results of table 11 indicate that 34 participants strongly agree that high likes signify that the person is liked amongst people, 115 participants agree, 62 participants are undecided, 53 participants disagree and 13 participants strongly disagree.

Table 12: Posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like post back

	Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	70	25.3	25.3	25.3
agree	88	31.8	31.8	57.0
undecided	60	21.7	21.7	78.7
disagree	51	18.4	18.4	97.1
strongly disagree	8	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 12, 25.3% participants strongly agree that post are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like posts back, 31.8 participants agree, 21.7 are undecided, 18.4% disagree and 2.9% strongly disagree.

Table 13: Only friends like each other post on instagram

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	30	10.8	10.8	10.8
	agree	38	13.7	13.7	24.5
	undecided	49	17.7	17.7	42.2
	disagree	108	39.0	39.0	81.2
	strongly disagree	52	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results of table 13 show that 10.8% of the participants strongly agree that only friends like each other's posts on Instagram, 13.7% agree, 17.7% are undecided, 39.0% disagree and 18.8% strongly agree.

Table 14: Selfies are liked more than any other post

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	35	12.6	12.6	12.6
	agree	73	26.4	26.4	39.0
	undecided	79	28.5	28.5	67.5
	disagree	73	26.4	26.4	93.9
	strongly disagree	17	6.1	6.1	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Result indicates that 12.6% participants strongly agree that selfies are liked more than any other post, 26.4% participants agree, 28.5% participants are undecided, 26.4% participants disagree and 6.1% strongly disagree.

Table 15: Post are liked only during the day.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	13	4.7	4.7	4.7
	agree	42	15.2	15.2	19.9
	undecided	92	33.2	33.2	53.1
	disagree	88	31.8	31.8	84.8
	strongly disagree	42	15.2	15.2	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 15 indicates that 13 participants strongly agree that post are liked only during the day, 42 agree, 92 are undecided, 88 disagree and 42 participants strongly disagree.

Table 16: Post are liked only at night

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	20	7.2	7.2	7.2
	agree	35	12.6	12.6	19.9
	undecided	89	32.1	32.1	52.0
	disagree	96	34.7	34.7	86.6
	strongly disagree	37	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

34.7% disagree with the statement that post is liked only at night. 32.1% are undecided, 13.4% strongly disagree, 12.6% agree and 7.2% strongly agree.

Table 17: Posts are liked more when there is free access to internet.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	75	27.1	27.1	27.1
	agree	79	28.5	28.5	55.6
	undecided	68	24.5	24.5	80.1
	disagree	43	15.5	15.5	95.7
	strongly disagree	12	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results of table 17 indicate that 27.1% strongly agree that posts are liked more when there is free access to internet, 28.5% agree, 24.5% are undecided, 15.5% disagree and 4.3 strongly disagree.

Table 18: Likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	42	15.2	15.2	15.2
	agree	86	31.0	31.0	46.2
	undecided	74	26.7	26.7	72.9
	disagree	59	21.3	21.3	94.2
	strongly disagree	16	5.8	5.8	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 18 shows that 42 participants strongly agree that likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender, 86 participants agree, 74 are undecided, 59 disagree and 16 strongly disagree.

Table 19: Liking a post shows interest in that individual.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	26	9.4	9.4	9.4
	agree	97	35.0	35.0	44.4
	undecided	90	32.5	32.5	76.9
	disagree	54	19.5	19.5	96.4
	strongly disagree	10	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 19 shows that 9.4% strongly agree that liking a post shows interest in that individual, 35% agree, 32.5% are undecided, 19.5% disagree and 3.6 strongly disagree.

Table 20: Likes are appreciated more than comments on post

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	43	15.5	15.5	15.5
	agree	73	26.4	26.4	41.9
	undecided	80	28.9	28.9	70.8
	disagree	66	23.8	23.8	94.6
	strongly disagree	15	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results indicate that 43 participants strongly agree that likes are appreciated more than comments on posts, 73 agree, 80 are undecided, 66 disagree and 15 strongly disagree.

Table 21: Commenting on a post indicates interest in that individual

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	43	15.5	15.5	15.5
	agree	92	33.2	33.2	48.7
	undecided	70	25.3	25.3	74.0
	disagree	60	21.7	21.7	95.7
	strongly disagree	12	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results indicate that 43 participants strongly agree that commenting on a post indicates interest in that individual, 92 participants agree, 70 participants are undecided, 60 participants disagree and 12 participants strongly disagree.

Table 22: High number of likes on a post indicates popularity

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	67	24.2	24.2	24.2
	agree	86	31.0	31.0	55.2
	undecided	39	14.1	14.1	69.3
	disagree	59	21.3	21.3	90.6
	strongly disagree	26	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 22, 24.1% strongly agree that high likes on a post indicates popularity, 30.9% agree, 14.0% are undecided, 21.2% disagree and 9.4% strongly disagree.

Table 23: Low number of likes on a post indicates low number of friends

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	35	12.6	12.6	12.6
	agree	75	27.1	27.1	39.7
	undecided	61	22.0	22.0	61.7
	disagree	58	20.9	20.9	82.7
	strongly disagree	48	17.3	17.3	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results indicate that 35 participants strongly agree that low number of likes on a post indicates low number of friends, 75 agree, 61 are undecided, 58 disagree and 48 strongly disagree.

Table 24: Posts relating to couples are liked just as much as personal selfies.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	41	14.8	14.8	14.8
	agree	70	25.3	25.3	40.1
	undecided	90	32.5	32.5	72.6
	disagree	64	23.1	23.1	95.7
	strongly disagree	12	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 24, 41 participants strongly agree that post relating to couples are liked just as much as personal selfies, 70 agree, 90 are undecided, 64 disagree and 12 strongly disagree.

Table 25: Post on relationships are not liked.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	17	6.1	6.1	6.1
	agree	42	15.2	15.2	21.3
	undecided	88	31.8	31.8	53.1
	disagree	91	32.9	32.9	85.9
	strongly disagree	39	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 25 show that 17 participants strongly agree that posts on relationships are not liked, 42 participants agree, 88 are undecided, 91 disagree and 39 strongly disagree.

Table 26: Post are not liked out of jealousy

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	29	10.5	10.5	10.5
	agree	63	22.7	22.7	33.2
	undecided	94	33.9	33.9	67.1
	disagree	71	25.6	25.6	92.8
	strongly disagree	20	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 26 show that 10.5% strongly agree that posts are not liked out of jealousy, 22.7% agree, 33.9% are undecided, 25.6% disagree and 7.2% strongly disagree.

Table 27: Likes are higher on a post during the weekend

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	45	16.2	16.2	16.2
	agree	97	35.0	35.0	51.3
	undecided	77	27.8	27.8	79.1
	disagree	51	18.4	18.4	97.5
	strongly disagree	7	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 27, 45 participants strongly agree that likes are higher on a post during the weekend, 97 participants agree, 77 are undecided, 51 disagree and 7 strongly disagree.

Table 28: Likes are higher on a post during the day

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	11	4.0	4.0	4.0
	agree	50	18.1	18.1	22.0
	undecided	122	44.0	44.0	66.1
	disagree	84	30.3	30.3	96.4
	strongly disagree	10	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results show that 11 strongly agree that likes are higher on a post during the day, 50 agree, 122 are undecided, 84 disagree and 10 strongly disagree.

Table 29: Seminude pictures posted have a high number of likes

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	59	21.3	21.3	21.3
	agree	85	30.7	30.7	52.0
	undecided	85	30.7	30.7	82.7
	disagree	34	12.3	12.3	94.9
	strongly disagree	14	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Table 29 show that 59 participants strongly agree that seminude pictures posted have high number of likes, 85 agree, 85 are undecided, 34 disagree and 14 strongly disagree.

Table 30: Nude picture increase likes on post.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	58	20.9	20.9	20.9
	agree	70	25.3	25.3	46.2
	undecided	87	31.4	31.4	77.6
	disagree	42	15.2	15.2	92.8
	strongly disagree	20	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Result of table 30 show that 20.9% strongly agree that nude picture increase like on post, 25.3% agree, 31.4% are undecided, 15.2% disagree and 7.2% strongly disagree.

Table 31: Fashionable posts have high number of likes.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	85	30.7	30.7	30.7
	agree	118	42.6	42.6	73.3
	undecided	41	14.8	14.8	88.1
	disagree	26	9.4	9.4	97.5
	strongly disagree	7	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

Results from table 31 indicate that 85 strongly agree that fashionable posts have high number of likes, 118 agree, 41 are undecided, 26 disagree and 7 strongly disagree.

Table 32: Posts are liked randomly.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	38	13.7	13.7	13.7
	agree	94	33.9	33.9	47.7
	undecided	87	31.4	31.4	79.1
	disagree	46	16.6	16.6	95.7
	strongly disagree	12	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 32, 13.7% strongly agree that posts are liked randomly, 33.8% agree, 31.3% are undecided, 16.5% disagree and 4.3% strongly disagree.

Table 33: Posts are liked relating to the status of individuals in the society.

		Occurrence	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	95	34.3	34.3	34.3
	agree	81	29.2	29.2	63.5
	undecided	55	19.9	19.9	83.4
	disagree	32	11.6	11.6	94.9
	strongly disagree	14	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	277	100.0	100.0	

According to table 33, 95 participants strongly agree that posts are liked relating to the status of individuals in the society. 82 participants agree, 54 are undecided, 32 disagree and 14 strongly disagree.

Measuring respondents' gender differentiation in respect to "Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?"

To measure the differentiation of how male and female respondents post on their timeline or status update on Instagram, Independent sample Ttest was conducted (See Table 34).

Table 34: Independent Sample Ttest measuring respondents' gender differentiation in respect to 'Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?'

	F	t	df	sig
Post are liked because of friends are online	2.188	-.492	275	.623
		-.501	256.027	.617
Posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and	2.029	.894	275	.372
		.878	225.837	.381

like post back				
Posts are liked more when there is free access to internet	.692	.619 .626	275 249.772	.536 .532
Liking a post shows interest in that individual.	.618	-1.177 -1.180	275 243.531	.240 .239

$p < 0.05$; $p < 0.01$

The table above (Table 33) shows f value, t value, degree of freedom and p value. Reports from the table indicates that there is no statistically significant difference when p was placed at 0.05 in respect to the question "Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?"

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

Conclusion chapter represents the abstract and meaning derived from the research carried out in relation with the questions of the research and the concluded section. Proposition are mentioned for future studies of research relating to this topic.

5.1 Summary of the Study

Research was processed to outline the Understanding of Likes on Instagram amongst EMU students. Social Networking sites have become a part of our everyday lives and consciously or unconsciously, we are being affected by it. Its effect on us is much bigger than we admit.

The study made use of Uses and Gratification Theory and it used it because it research the extent to which EMU students use the selected Social Networking Site; Instagram to satisfy their various needs. Instagram gives different gratification to its audience; educational purposes, entertainment purposes, business purposes etc.

Research was investigated and results collected in Eastern Mediterranean University and the members who answered the questions were selected randomly from various Faculty's to Dormitories to the Institutions Library. 300 questionnaires were distributed but due to certain events 277 copies were retrieved back for evaluation. The sampling strategy was simple random sampling as stated earlier and the survey was conducted using questionnaires.

5.2 Conclusions Drawn from the Study

As stated earlier, 277 results were analyzed. Participants were selected randomly from the Institution. Participants were from different countries, majority of the participants were Male (164). A greater number of members' age falls within 21-24 years (53.6%). And a greater number of the members are undergraduates (73%).

RQ1: Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?

According to the results obtained from survey, posts are liked due to either interest in the individual or due to the status quo of an individual as well in the society. 31.8% post are also liked so the likes can be reciprocated. 36.8% agree that Posts are liked because friends are online, 31.8% agree that posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like back, and 34.3% strongly agree that post are liked due to status quo of an individual.

RQ2: Independent Sample Ttest measuring respondents' gender differentiation in respect to 'Why does one like a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?'

There is no significant statistical difference.

RQ3: What type of picture posted on the timeline or status update is liked on Instagram?

Results revealed that nude pictures get average number of likes, couple pictures as well as selfies are liked on timeline. 30.7% and 30.7% agreed and are undecided respectively that seminude pictures posted have a high number of likes, 31.4% are

undecided that nude pictures increase likes on post, 42.4% fashionable post have high number of likes, and 32.5% are undecided that post relating to couples are liked just as much as personal selfies.

RQ4: What is the significance of the number of likes on a post on the timeline or status update on Instagram?

According to the results, high number of likes indicates the level of popularity of individuals. It also signifies that people like or appreciate that individual. 41.5% agree that a high number of likes signify that the person is liked amongst people, and 31.0% agree that high number of likes on a post indicates popularity.

RQ5: Does the gender of the individual determine your willingness to like the post on the timeline or status update on Instagram?

The result indicates that there is a variation in gender; this is noticed in participants' response to "Likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender". Results show that the gender of the individual would attract more of the opposite gender to like the post than the same gender. 31.0% agree that likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender.

RQ6: Does the time of the post on the timeline or status update determine the number of likes on Instagram?

The results indicate that post are liked at any time of the day and any time of the week. But likes on post are higher during the weekend than during the week. The

availability of free internet is also a major factor when it comes to liking post on timeline. 33.2% are undecided that post are liked only during the day, and 32.1% are undecided that post are liked only at night.

RQ7: What gets more attention; likes or comments on a post on timeline or status update on Instagram?

Likes on a post are more important than comment on a post. 28.1% were indecisive about this statement but 26.3% agreed with it. Which implies that although most people might not totally agree with it, a close number to the category of most agree with it.

The research has shown explicitly the opinion of Eastern Mediterranean University Students. My major conclusion obtained from this research would include:

One, Youths have a certain likening to Social Media and are mostly online and connected to the internet at all times. They converse more online than they probably do in their daily lives.

Two, likes on post on Instagram have a certain effect on people and it tends to reflect certain things about that individual. It could be popularity, likeness from an individual or just a certain level of importance. For people, social media is not just the internet, it is their lives. Some people are more concerned about the opinion of complete strangers than face to face friends about their pictures, videos or even personality. And for them their personality can be described online.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This research was conducted amongst various students from diverse departments in Eastern Mediterranean University in Fall 2016/2017 semester. Further research can include staff of the institution especially as social media is not only used by youths. Also a comparison of two different social media can be done to understand better the effects and implications on likes on a post and if the reaction is the same for both sites.

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APPENDIX

Appendix: Study on Understanding Likes on Instagram Amongst EMU Students.

Dear respondent,

I am a Masters student at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies EMU conducting a research on 'Understanding likes on Instagram amongst EMU Students'. I humbly request your cooperation in filling out this questionare as it would assist me in gathering information concerning my research and finding answers to my research questions. I appreciate your time and effort in this project. Information gathered is confidential and will be used for academic purpose only.

Thank You.

Part I

Demographic Questions

Kindly mark the option that reflects your opinion/view.

1. AGE

    a. 17-20 b. 21-24 c. 25-28.

2. Gender

    a. Male b. Female

3. Nationality

    a. Cypriot b. Turkish c. Nigerian d. Others

4. Educational Status

    a. Undergraduate b. Masters c. PHD

Part II

5. Which of these social networking sites do you visit regularly? A. Instagram
   B. Facebook C. Twitter D. All

6. How often do you visit Instagram? A. Am always logged in B. 3-5hours a
   day C. 8-10 hours a day D. Once in a while

7. What makes you visit Instagram? A. Availability of Internet B. Boredom C.
   Leisure D. Educational Purpose

Liket scale

In this section please select the answer indicating your extent of agreement with the
following statements using, STRONGLY AGREE (SA), AGREE (A), UNDECIDED
(U), DISAGREE (D) and STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD).

S/N	Description	SA	A	U	D	SD
Q8	Posts are liked because friends are online.					
Q9	A high number of likes signify that the person is liked amongst people.					
Q10	Posts are liked so that individuals can reciprocate and like post back.					
Q11	Only friends like each other's post on Instagram.					
Q12	Selfies are liked more than any other post.					
Q13	Post are liked only during the day.					
Q14	Posts are liked only at night.					

Q15	Posts are liked more when there is free access to internet.					
Q16	Likes from the opposite gender is usually more than likes from the same gender.					
Q17	Liking a post shows interest in that individual.					
Q18	Likes are appreciated more than comments on post.					
Q19	Commenting on a post indicates interest in that individual.					
Q20	High number of likes on a post indicates popularity.					
Q21	Low number of likes on a post indicates low number of friends.					
Q22	Posts relating to couples are liked just as much as personal selfies.					
Q23	Posts on relationships are not liked.					
Q24	Posts are not liked out of jealousy.					
Q25	Likes are higher on a post during the weekend.					
Q26	Likes are higher on a post during the weekday.					
Q27	Seminude pictures posted have a high number of likes.					
Q28	Nude pictures increase likes on post.					

Q29	Fashionable posts have high number of likes.					
Q30	Posts are liked randomly.					
Q31	Posts are liked relating to the status of individuals in the society.					