

# The Acceptance of Instagram Contents as a Source to Improve Self-Motivation Among Young Adults in Malaysia

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Accepted: 15 February 2022 | Published: 1 March 2022

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55057/ajbs.2022.4.1.2>

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**Abstract:** *Online social networking has transformed communication in today's era. The rise of digital communication brings new phenomenon in the form of human communication with the existence of social media such as Instagram. Instagram contents are varied; entertaining, educational and some are motivational. In particular, users are interested in Instagram contents to increase motivation generated by using quotes. Instagram concept of posting images with descriptions make Instagram users to view and like the contents that lead to the psychological traits such as confidence, courage and self-motivation. This paper attempts to examine the acceptance of Instagram contents as a source to improve self-motivation among young adults in Malaysia. Quantitative design is applied where a total of 312 respondents of Instagram users who are young adults from UiTM Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau had answered a survey to know their acceptance of Instagram contents in elevating their motivation. The survey indicated that inspirational contents on Instagram is the main factor for young adults in boosting their self-motivation. The result shown that inspirational contents on Instagram really did in motivating young adults when they are demotivated yet felt a sense of calmness and relief after reading or viewing the inspirational content on Instagram. This study provides significant implications on people's live where in this technology and social media era in order to increase the positive effects of social media on emotional well-being. As social media becomes more significant in people's lives, it is important to know that social media, Instagram is a culture that people rely on as a medium for information and to raise motivations.*

**Keywords:** Instagram, inspirational contents, self-motivation, social media

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## 1. Introduction

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have become new norm and ordinary in people's live. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) this day and age provides simplicity to the people in obtaining information needs. Social media is one of the information and communication technologies that are increasingly used which is Instagram (Sari & Lubis, 2017). Human life is affected by the growing and sophisticated technology, hence the development of information and communications technology makes information easier for people to communicate and boost their motivations (Anugratami *et al.*, 2015).

Social media such as Instagram is an online media, where the contents are participated and owned by the users. Additionally, Instagram also is a social network application that shares multimedia contents. Similar with other social networks, Instagram concept is almost the same where it allows the interaction with other users, commenting, tagging in photos and videos. Instagram is based purely on visual sharing, therefore, the main intention of all those who registered is to share their daily life, experiences and to get some motivations or inspirations (Cocco & Brogna, 2019). Instagram has become almost unavoidable in daily life today where the rise of mobile technology led to the new phenomenon of social media. According to Zhehao Zhao (2020) there are two categories of media consumptions or media experiences: hedonic and eudaimonic; Hedonic media experiences focus on pleasure-seeking meanwhile eudaimonic media experience emphasizes on the consumption of meaningful and inspirational contents in social media. Supported by Rieger and Klimmt (2018) hedonic entertainment was defined as an enjoyment, while eudaimonic entertainment was termed as an appreciation and inspiration. The eudaimonic media experiences are related with human connection.

The widespread of social media in this digital era affect the users' way of thinking, behaving and feeling. The use of social media among young adults give inconsistent impact. The growing presence of social media usage give negative thought about mental health however there are good sides of social media usage where it is an interactive tool and important in young adults development process (Berryman *et al.*, 2018).

According to previous studies, there are several types of variables that impact users' motivations with the engagement on social media sites such as posting time, media type and also social media contents (Eriksson *et al.*, 2019). Certain media content can elevate social good and well-being by focusing on inspirational contents shared on Instagram, thus can increase self-motivation among young adults. Instagram emphasis on image sharing with positive quotes. Hence inspirational contents on social media is an interesting branch to study for the purpose of this research in order to know the young adults acceptance towards the inspirational contents on Instagram.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Social Media Inspirational Contents**

New technologies invented mobile phone and existence of mobile device led to the social media developing trend where people communicate with mobile social network. Since mobile phone is portable it makes social media a part of people's daily life routine where it enables people to interact with others anytime. The use and popularity of Instagram as a trending social networking site is continuously and rapidly increasing especially among young adults. Instagram features like other social media networking sites allow users to share images, videos, comments and like button but Instagram is specifically focusing more on visual images and video (Casalo *et al.*, 2019).

Moreover, meaningful or positive content is not only found in conventional mass communication however content from social media especially Instagram shared and posted positive and inspirational content. Virtually social media serve as a source of daily inspirations, where a large number of inspirational or meaningful message will traffic through social media everyday (Shifman, 2013). Meanwhile reseachers Abdul Rauf Ridzuan *et. al* (2014) stated that the primacy of social media depends on its mainly purpose. Social media is known as a tool for information delivery and how users perceive the information either positive or negatively.

According to Haapasalmi (2017) Instagram popularity have changed the user's understanding and acceptance of social networking. Inspiring contents on Instagram become an influential account among users those who have a large following. This shows that Instagram has created a platform for a strong influence and inspired users with its positive content. Supported by Janicke *et. al* (2018) inspiring media content influence user's wellbeing. The experience of inspiring media content can make people engage positively in their daily life.

### **Content Likeability and Self-Motivation**

Motivations have been crucial in social media, as many researchers examine why people use social media as a medium to increase self-motivation by liking the social media content. According to Wai Lai & Liu (2020) likeability in the psychological studies, indicates the positive impression of a person, that shows their most agreeable on something. It defines the acceptance and preference of a person towards anything they read, watch and etc, which led to the encouragement and motivate others to apply likewise. Additionally, the use of the like button became favorable among users that shows their acceptance of the content uploaded. The term likeability indicates a user's liking judgments of the contents on social media yet prove users are affected and motivated with the content produced.

In Information Science, research on motivation has mostly been carried out in order to understand people's behaviors when seeking information. Motivation is one of the essential factors that encourage people to carry out actions in everyday life. Users motivation can increase or decrease depending on their search on social media content. Social media users who are motivated and satisfied with the contents on social media platform feel productive and will disseminate information to others, when they are experiencing motivation and are inspired by the content. Users accept the inspirational accounts on Instagram by keeping up- to- date on account or topics on social media they are interested in or inspired of the posting (Oh & Syn, 2015).

A survey on inspirational media use found that the most mentioned media that have inspired the users are social media where music and movies as the main factors of content likeability. Meanwhile the inspiring content users inspired in social media is very assorted such as motivations quotes and etc. There are variety themes of inspiring social media content that people find it interesting and inspiring (Janicke *et al.*, 2018). This statement supported by Gunantar & Transinata (2019) the rapid growth of social media as a social networking sites are becoming important social desires among people. On Instagram, users can express feelings and situations of the real life. Many Instagram accounts share quotes about romance, biblical quotes, humor and motivation. There are also accounts that share various forms of languages that consists of inspirational elements. The study shows that the Instagram contents such as pictures of quotes and caption increase the users self-motivation in terms of daily life or even for educational purposes.

### **Tables and Figures**

Responses from 312 respondents from the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, UiTM Kampus Rembau have been collected and analyzed from survey form that consists of 8 items to answer the RQ. Respondents were asked to rate their responses using Likert scale with 4 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Agree), 2 (Disagree) and 1 (Strongly Disagree).

**Table 1: The Acceptance of Young Adults towards Inspirational Account on Instagram that Increase Self- Motivation**

Item	Percentage (%)			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I often view motivational contents on Instagram to gain motivation when I am feeling down.	39.1	42.3	14.7	3.8
I often feel like the contents of inspirational Instagram accounts are applicable to me.	46.8	46.2	6.4	0.6
I often feel at ease after reading or viewing inspirational contents on Instagram.	42.3	46.8	9.6	1.3
I am inspired by the contents from motivational Instagram accounts.	44.9	48.7	5.8	0.6
I take the contents from Instagram inspirational accounts as important in boosting my motivation.	42.9	40.4	15.4	1.3
I can see a better direction in my life when I read contents from inspirational Instagram accounts.	30.8	46.2	18.6	4.5
Inspirational Instagram accounts do motivate me from time to time.	42.9	50	7.1	0
Inspirational Instagram accounts are important to me especially when I feel demotivated.	36.5	43.6	16	3.8

### 3. Methodology

This study was quantitative research that allowed for seeking information relating to acceptance of Instagram content that can lead to self- motivation among young adults in Malaysia. This study made use of Instagram users in their 18 to 30's which indicates the young adults age group from Faculty of Communication and Media Studies in UiTM Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Rembau. The research center of attention was on Instagram as some young adults are affected by Instagram content that can increase their self- motivation. The total number of both students and staff members of the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies is 1530 people. As for this study, 312 completed questionnaires were answered and therefore the findings are based on these 312 respondents. Questionnaires was employed for data collection consisting of two sections, which is the first section is the demographical profile of respondents while the second section is to know the young adult's acceptance towards the inspirational contents on Instagram as the purpose of this study. All measurement items were measured by applying Likert scale.

### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The demographic data collected indicate that majority of the respondents are female with 69.2%, whereas male respondents are 30.8%. It is also found that a majority of them are aged 25 years old and below with 80.8%, while the other 19.2% are between the age of 26 to 30 years old.

As shown in Table 1, positive feedbacks were given where majority of them respond with strongly agree to item number two (I often feel like the contents of inspirational Instagram

accounts are applicable to me) and item number five (I take the contents from Instagram inspirational accounts as important in boosting my motivation). Agree is the most answered by respondents which majority of them showed positive responses showing their acceptance for all other items that have been identified in this study.

The responses showed that Instagram users especially young adults accepted that inspirational content on Instagram as the main factor for young adults in boosting their self-motivation. The result showed that inspirational contents on Instagram had really motivated young adults when they are demotivated yet felt a sense of calmness and relief after reading or viewing the inspirational contents on Instagram. This study found that users truly accepted Instagram content as a source to improve self-motivation.

Instagram contents are relevant, pleasureable, inspiring and motivating. This amplifies Nurliyana Kamilah Khairul Anuar *et. al* (2021) on the elements of proximity, played a crucial role in terms of motivating Instagram users that interrelated on how they perceived the information on social media. Mentioned by Choudhury *et. al* (2014) the relevant of social media content is likely to align user's cognitive information comprehension experience, thus respondents accept young adults can improve their self-motivation from Instagram contents due to its relevancy. The acceptance of Instagram content as a source of self-motivation by which users spent time on social media because it is pleasurable. This is proved by Sagiyanto & Ardiyanti (2018) that users are experiencing social media by being selective in choosing their preferable content. Besides pleasurable, Instagram content is also a platform to increase self-motivation among users where Andalibi *et. al* (2017) strengthen that social media is a medium users need emotional support virtually. Inspirational contents on Instagram can reduce stress, increase self-motivation and gain advices. As added by Casalo *et al.* (2019), user's emotional states could change which will increase their levels of motivations and confident while using Instagram.

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