

The Vanity behind Instagram: The hidden 'likes' to Narcissism and Histrionic Personality

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Abstract

In 2019, Instagram hid 'likes' to followers in the U.S. and several other countries, to lower pressure on adolescents obsessed with getting likes from peers. The move was the result of several studies showing negative effects of Instagram on young people. This article adds to those studies by testing how Instagram may increase vanity in teenagers. Vanity is at the core of many marketing campaigns in industries such as cosmetics, clothing and luxury brands. 417 university students from a South American private university were surveyed, and data were analyzed using a Structural Equation Model. Results show that Instagram intensity is a significant predictor of vanity, and that two personality traits, vulnerable narcissism and histrionic personality, mediate the effects of Instagram on vanity. The paths related to histrionic personality were stronger than those related to vulnerable narcissism.

Keywords: *Instagram; vanity; personality traits*

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics