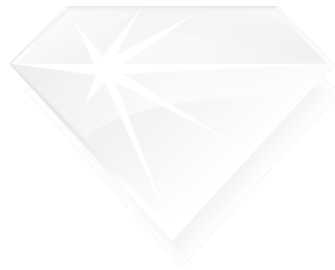SELF-PRESENTATION OF OTHERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON

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              Youth Depression in Thailand: A Case Study of Facebook

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Self-presentation of others on social media and its impact on Burmese youth depression in Thailand: A case study of Facebook (117 pp.)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact of young audiences' exposure to self-presentation content (EXPC) on Facebook on their self-esteem and depression. Online survey was conducted with 259 Burmese youth living in Thailand, aged between 18 and 28 years old. Regression Analysis results revealed that gender significantly moderates the relationship between EXPC and self-esteem, with females displaying greater sensitivity to social comparisons, but no significant moderating effect on relationship between EXPC and depression. These results underscored the importance of addressing gender dynamics in mental health studies and intervention programs with diverse gender orientation. The study not only highlighted the need for targeted policies and mental health interventions to foster digital literacy and emotional resilience, mitigating the negative psychological effects of social media, but also contributes to a deeper understanding of the gendered dynamics of social media use and offers insights for future research and practical implications in health communication.

Keywords: *Facebook, Burmese youth, self-presentation, self-esteem, depression, mental health, health communication*

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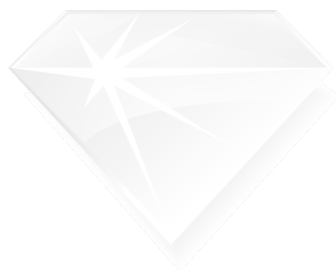
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research study addresses the pervasive issue of how people's online presentations, such as photos and videos on social media platforms, particularly Facebook, can significantly impact the self-esteem and mental health, depression, of young individuals. This chapter serves as the foundation of this research proposal, providing insight into the rationale and problem statement that underscores the urgency of this investigation as well as the knowledge gap found in past studies. In addition, this chapter outlines the specific objectives that guide the study, the key research questions aimed to answer, and a clear definition of the terms and concepts essential to the research. Through this comprehensive introduction, we lay the groundwork for a focused and meaningful exploration of the effects of other's self-presentation on Facebook and its relation to the self-esteem and depression of youth.

1.1 Rationale and Problem Statement

Today's media landscape is characterized by its vastness and diversity, providing youth with unlimited access to digital content through an array of devices, including smartphones, tablets, computers, laptops, and gaming consoles. Social media emerges as a pivotal element within this multifaceted environment (Nesi, 2020). The modern digital era has witnessed the amplification of social media platforms, which have transformed the way individuals communicate and interact

with each other. Individuals visit social media sites to engage in many diverse types of entertainment and social activity including playing games, socializing, passing time, communicating, and posting pictures (Allen, Ryan, Gray, McInerney, M, & Waters, 2014; Ryan, Chester, Reece, Xenos, 2014). Several studies have identified positive outcomes for both extroverted and introverted individuals regarding their perceived social capital, well-being, and adjustment (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008; Peng, Lin, Kim, Kim, & LaRose, 2012). Studies also reported higher scores on social media addiction scales in younger people compared to older people (e.g., Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg, & Pallesen, 2012, Kuss, Griffiths, Karila & Billieux, 2014). This demonstrates strong face validity as these digital platforms are integral to the recreational and social activities of teenagers and young adults (Allen et al., 2014). Mental health data for adolescents in Myanmar are limited, with The Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) being the primary data source. Data from the 2016 GSHS data show high prevalence estimates for depression (27.2%) and suicidal ideation (9.4%) among adolescents (13-17 years) (World Health Organisation, 2018a). In particular, suicidal ideation has increased markedly in prevalence from 0.7% to 9.2% amongst 13-15-year-olds in the space of less than a decade (Carroll, Wulan, Swe, Myint, Sanda, Lwin, Oo, Khaing, San, Tun, Cini, Win, Azzopardi, 2021).

Facebook is now an integral part of daily life for many people in Myanmar with different age groups, offering various advantages in terms of connection and information sharing as well as getting what one desires. The internet platform Facebook serves various purposes such as entertainment, communication, relationship building, self-promotion, and marketing. It attracts significant user engagement,

evident from the amount of time individuals spend on the platform (Dwivedi et al., 2021). As of January 2023, there are 23.93 million internet users in Myanmar. The internet penetration rate in Myanmar stood at 44.0 percent of the total population at the start of 2023 (Kemp, 2023). According to the statistics from NapoleonCat, as of October 2023, Myanmar had a total of 21,150,700 Facebook users, representing 37.3% of the country's entire population. Among these users, the majority, constituting 53.2%, were men. The largest demographic group on the platform was individuals aged 18 to 24, with a substantial count of 7,700,000 users. Notably, the most significant gender difference was observed within the age group of 25 to 34, where men outnumbered women by 4,100,000 users. A study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania and published in the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology involved 140 undergraduates who were divided into two groups: one continued their regular use of Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram, while the other limited each platform to 10 minutes per day (30 minutes total). Participants provided real-time data from their phones to track their app usage accurately. Results showed that those who limited their social media use to 30 minutes per day reported feeling significantly better after three weeks, with reduced levels of depression and loneliness, particularly among those with higher initial depression levels. Both groups reported experiencing less fear of missing out (FOMO) and anxiety by the study's end, possibly due to increased self-monitoring (Walton, 2018).

In the context of Myanmar's youth, the influence of these platforms, Facebook, on their emotional well-being has raised significant concerns. Carroll et al. (2021) said that depression in particular appears prevalent with estimates for Myanmar's adolescents (depression, 27.2%) at least five times that of southeast Asian

regional estimates (females 5.1%, males 3.8%) (World Health Organization, 2017).

The rising number of young people experiencing depression in Myanmar is an

alarming issue, and it is critical to comprehend how Facebook communication

patterns affect this phenomenon. However, the impact of self-presentation, especially

how the expressions of others using photos and videos on the platform may lead to

adverse effects on mental health and confidence in themselves, subsequently

triggering feelings of low self-esteem and depression among youth. Mental health

significantly influences overall health, well-being, and socioeconomic progress.

Despite its significance, global policies and actions have historically overlooked this

aspect until recently (World Health Organization, 2008). This is an area where the

existing knowledge is limited. Efforts to address mental health must be context-

specific, considering the wide variation in its conceptualization and the resources

available for response (World Health Organization, 2013b). Illustrating this diversity

is Myanmar, a Southeast Asian nation with a population of nearly 60 million people,

comprising 135 distinct ethnic groups (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2007).

Myanmar has experienced rapid socioeconomic and political development in the past

decade, with mental health emerging as a significant policy concern (Parmar, Barina,

Low, Tun, Otterness, Mhote, Htoo, Kyaw, Lwin, Maung, Moo, Oo, Reh, Mon, Singh,

Goyal & Richards, 2015).

While the statistics provided offer valuable insights into Facebook usage in

Myanmar, it's essential to note that they primarily focus on binary gender

classifications, namely male and female, without explicitly acknowledging the

LGBTQ+ community. This omission highlights a critical gap in understanding the

diverse demographics and experiences within the population of Facebook users in

Myanmar. Therefore, my research paper aims to address this limitation by specifically focusing on individuals who identify as male, female, or LGBTQ+ within the age range of 18-28 and who actively use Facebook. By including this demographic group, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the necessity to explore the role of Facebook communication, in terms of others' self-presentation, in the context of youth self-esteem and depression in Myanmar.

1.2 <u>Knowledge Gap Found from Past Studies</u>

The current research landscape concerning mental health, Facebook, and related issues such as depression and anxiety in Myanmar has witnessed significant attention, particularly following the political upheaval in the country. Numerous articles have delved into the impact of these factors on individual well-being, highlighting shifts and challenges post-coup. However, a notable gap exists in exploring the nuanced relationship between others' self-presentation on Facebook and its effects on self-esteem and depression among Myanmar's youth. Despite the abundance of research on mental health and social media, little attention has been given to this specific aspect, emphasizing the need for targeted investigations into this unexplored territory. Additionally, existing literature has explored various facets of internet usage and its effects on mental health outcomes among undergraduate students, including the influence of attitudes towards the internet, depression, anxiety, and stress on internet addiction and academic performance. While these studies provide valuable insights, there remains a gap in understanding the specific impact of others' self-presentation on Facebook on self-esteem and depression among young

adults in Myanmar. Furthermore, research has examined the proliferation of fake news, hate speech, and violence on social media platforms in Myanmar, particularly their implications for the daily lives and psychological well-being of marginalized communities such as Muslim youth in conflict-affected regions like Rakhine. While these studies shed light on broader societal issues, there is a distinct lack of focus on the personal experiences and mental health implications for individuals, particularly regarding the influence of others' self-presentation on platforms like Facebook.

Moreover, efforts have been made to understand the mental health needs and coping mechanisms of young people in Myanmar to identify priorities for intervention. However, existing research often overlooks the specific role of social media and, more specifically, others' self-presentation on platforms like Facebook in shaping these mental health needs and coping strategies. This highlights the necessity for targeted studies to bridge this gap and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mental health landscape among Myanmar's youth.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This research aims to investigate the influence of others' self-presentation on Facebook, particularly through photos and videos, on the self-esteem and depression of Myanmar's youth. The specific objectives are as follows:

1.3.1 To assess the relationship between exposure to certain content, i.e photos and videos and the prevalence of depression and low self-esteem among young Facebook users in Myanmar.

1.3.2 To explore how the impact of low self-esteem and depression varies across different gender identities, including male, female, and LGBTQ+ individuals, in relation to exposure to others' content on Facebook, particularly photos and videos.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

1.4.1 How does exposure to specific content, such as photos and videos on Facebook, relate to the prevalence of depression among young Facebook users in Myanmar?

1.4.2 How do the impacts of low self-esteem and depression vary across different gender identities, including male, female, and LGBTQ+ individuals, in relation to exposure to others' content on Facebook?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research holds significant importance in the context of Myanmar, addressing a critical issue in contemporary society: The impact of others' self-presentation on Facebook on the mental health of the youth population. As Myanmar's youth increasingly engage with social media platforms like Facebook, understanding how exposure to specific content, such as photos and videos, influences their self-esteem and depression levels becomes imperative. The findings of this study can inform specific measures and initiatives aimed at enhancing the well-being of Myanmar's youth population. By shedding light on the relationship between exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook and mental health outcomes, particularly

depression and low self-esteem, this research contributes to the development of targeted interventions and strategies. These insights are crucial for addressing the mental and emotional health needs of young individuals in Myanmar and can potentially guide societal, educational, and business initiatives in promoting healthier online environments and supporting the mental well-being of the youth population.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study employs a quantitative research method to investigate the impact of others' self-presentation on Facebook, through images and videos, on self-esteem, and depression among young people in Myanmar. A random sampling method will be utilized to ensure the representativeness of the sample. The study will focus on the period preceding the coup in Myanmar to capture a baseline understanding of the relationship between others' self-presentation on Facebook and its effects on the mental health of young individuals in the country. A structured survey will be administered to collect data from participants. The survey will include questions designed to assess participants' perceptions of others' self-presentation on Facebook, as well as measures of self-esteem and depression.

The research will cover young people in Myanmar between the ages of 18 to 28 who are active users of Facebook. It aims to examine how exposure of content, i.e photos and videos, to others' self-presentation on Facebook influences their perceptions of self-esteem and depression.

1.7 <u>Definition of Terms</u>

1.7.1 Self-presentation: Self-presentation refers to how people attempt to present themselves to control or shape how others (called the audience) view them. It involves expressing oneself and behaving in ways that create a desired impression.

1.7.2 Self-Esteem is confidence in an individual's own worth, abilities, or morals. In this context, it reflects how youth in Myanmar perceive themselves and their self-worth.

1.7.3 Low Self-Esteem for this research purpose can be defined as how young people evaluate themselves negatively such as questioning their self-image, capabilities, focusing on personal flaws.

1.7.4 Youth Depression is a state of mental health issue i.e., low mood, sadness, insecurity, and emotional distress experienced by young individuals.

1.7.5 Content Exposure: This term signifies the degree to which Facebook users are subjected to and engage with various forms of content, i.e images and videos within their Facebook feed. Exposure to content may vary in terms of quantity and quality.

1.7.6 In the context of this research, gender encompasses the categories of male and female, as well as individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and others), acknowledging the diverse spectrum of gender identities beyond the traditional binary conception of male and female.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, an exploration is conducted into how social media, particularly Facebook, impacts the mental well-being of young people, with a specific focus on self-esteem and depression. Existing studies are reviewed to understand the relationship between social media use and these mental health issues, with the aim of identifying gaps and areas for further research. The chapter begins by discussing the theories and concepts guiding research in this area. Subsequently, an examination is made of studies investigating how social media exposure influences individuals' self-esteem. Additionally, research on the connection between social media use and depression among youth is analyzed. Through this literature review, the objective is to deepen the understanding of how social media affects youth mental health. This foundational review of literature and related theories contributes to the development of conceptual framework and research hypotheses.

2.1 Related Literature and Previous Studies

2.1.1 Overview of the Rise of Facebook

The widespread popularity of social network sites (SNSs) among Internet users has garnered significant attention in global academic literature, with a particular emphasis on Facebook (Piotrowski, 2012). Facebook, launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and initially exclusive to Harvard University students, swiftly transcended its origins, becoming a global social phenomenon. Its intuitive design and user-

friendly interactions helped a rapid expansion, reshaping digital social interaction. The introduction of features like the News Feed and the "Like" button transformed Facebook into a dynamic hub for real-time updates and user engagement. This evolution has not only made Facebook a cultural phenomenon but has also fundamentally altered communication patterns on a global scale. The platform provides a virtual space for self-expression, enabling users to curate online personas through photos, status updates, and shared content. The continuous evolution of Facebook is evident in its latest features and updates. Recent data highlights Facebook's ongoing efforts to enhance user experience, such as the introduction of new privacy settings aimed at empowering users to control their online presence more effectively (Chaturvedi, 2020). Additionally, Facebook's emphasis on community building is reflected in its initiatives to promote meaningful interactions among users, as evidenced by the expansion of features like Facebook Groups and Events (Meta Newsroom, 2022). The impact of Facebook extends beyond individual users to societal and cultural realms. Recent studies have explored how Facebook serves as a platform for social activism and civic engagement, with users utilizing the platform to organize events, share information, and mobilize support for various causes (Warren, Sulaiman, Jaafar, 2014). This aspect of Facebook underscores its role as a catalyst for social change and collective action, particularly among younger generations who are increasingly leveraging digital platforms for activism and advocacy. Furthermore, the integration of multimedia content on Facebook has become increasingly prominent, with features like Facebook Live and Stories offering new avenues for creative expression and storytelling. These multimedia elements not only enrich the user experience but also contribute to the platform's role as a dynamic and interactive

space for communication and self-expression (Meta Newsroom, 2018; Lum, & Chang, 2024).

The impact of Facebook on youth well-being has become a focal point of research, as the platform plays a significant role in the daily lives of millions. Users engage in various activities on Facebook, from sharing personal updates to viewing others' curated content. Facebook can facilitate social connections, allowing youth to stay connected with friends and communities. The platform can be a source of information and resources, contributing to increased awareness but constant exposure to curated content may lead to social comparison, potentially triggering depressive tendencies as individuals compare their lives to others (Butt, 2020; Christakis, & Shakya, 2018).

2.1.2 Myanmar's Digital Landscape and Facebook Usage in Myanmar

In Myanmar, Facebook's ascent has been particularly impactful, with widespread adoption making it an integral part of daily life. Accessible via mobile devices and accommodating various content types, Facebook stands as a dominant force in Myanmar's digital landscape. Understanding the rise of Facebook is essential for contextualizing the communication patterns and self-presentation dynamics explored in this research, especially concerning their impact on the mental well-being of Myanmar's youth. Figure 2.1 presents a screenshot of data illustrating Facebook users in Myanmar across different age groups and gender.

Figure 2.1: Facebook users in Myanmar
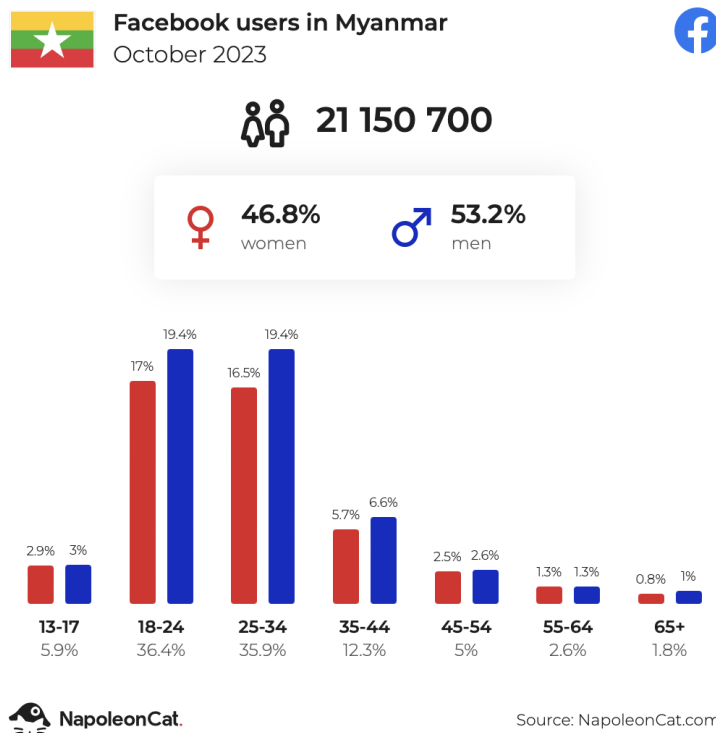
Source: NapoleonCat.com. NapoleonCat. (2023, October). Facebook Users in Myanmar. Retrieved from https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-myanmar/2023/10/

As of October 2023, Myanmar boasted a significant presence on Facebook, with a total of 21,150,700 users (about the population of New York), accounting for 37.3% of the nation's population (see Figure 2.1). Among these users, men constituted the majority at 53.2%. Notably, the largest demographic group on the platform was individuals aged 18 to 24, totaling 7,700,000 users (about twice the population of Oklahoma). Particularly noteworthy was the gender discrepancy within the 25 to 34 age group, where men outnumbered women by 4,100,000 users (about twice the

population of New Mexico). Both young individuals and adults expressed optimism about social media's potential to foster empathy and understanding among diverse groups in Myanmar society. Many believed that platforms like Facebook could contribute to peace and tolerance, with some citing individual experiences of gaining insights into other cultures through their interactions on the platform (Ridout, McKay, Amon, & Campbell, 2019). Figure 2.2 presents a screenshot of data illustrating the percentage of Facebook users (Dark Blue Line) in Myanmar between January 2021 to February 2024.

Figure 2.2: Social Media Stats in Myanmar
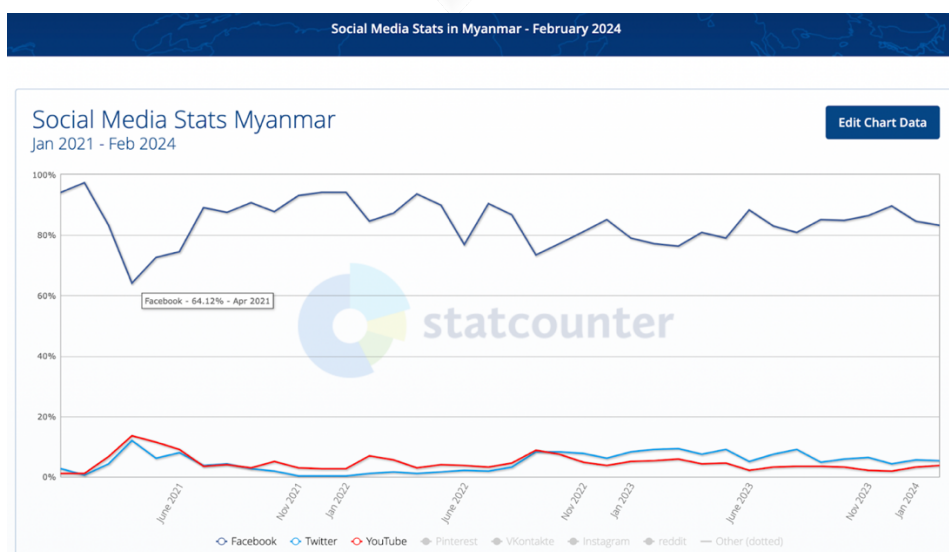
Source: StatCounter. StatCounter Global Stats. (n.d.). Social Media Stats for Myanmar. Retrieved from https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/myanmar/#monthly-202101-202404

Following the coup in Myanmar, the military authorities took measures to restrict access to Facebook. The military cited concerns about the spread of misinformation and efforts to maintain stability as reasons for the ban. The blocking of Facebook and other social media platforms was part of broader efforts to control information and communication channels within the country. This action follows a prolonged period of strained relations between the social media platform and the influential military institution, particularly in a nation where almost half of the population utilizes Facebook (Potkin, 2021). According to data depicted in the Figure 2.2 from StatCounter Global, Facebook usage experienced a decline to 64.12%, primarily due to people resorting to Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) to access the platform. Despite the ongoing ban, individuals in Myanmar continue to find ways to connect to Facebook, underscoring the resilience of Internet penetration in the country. Some fiber Internet service providers offer unrestricted access to popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube without the need for virtual private networks (VPNs). However, access to these platforms may still require the use of VPNs for customers using mobile data. This discrepancy in access methods can be inconvenient for users who rely on mobile data, as they must navigate the additional step of using VPNs to access these platforms.

2.1.3 Self-Presentation on Facebook

Facebook research primarily focuses on two key areas. The first one is about users' behavior, interpersonal relationships, and self-presentation on the platform by analyzing their personalities and motivations (Marshall, Lefringhausen, & Ferenczi, 2015). Notably, studies have highlighted the significance of certain Big Five

personality traits, identified as a particularly influential factor in shaping users' activities and presentation styles on Facebook (Ross, Orr, Sisic, Arseneault, Simmering, & Orr, 2009). Van Dijck (2013) argues that the evolution of social media platforms since 2008 has transformed them into instruments for personal storytelling and narrative self-presentation (p. 200, emphasis added), emphasizing the significance of changing digital architectures in shaping these functionalities. Morrison (2014) examines Facebook's function in the creation of autobiographical content, focusing on how the platform's status update feature encourages users to share personal information. She traces the development of this feature from its initial format of "[Name Surname] is [text box]" to the current "What's on your mind?" prompt, which allows for the sharing of multimedia content. It is worth noting that the status update feature has evolved significantly since Morrison's analysis, now termed as a 'post' with a more intricate interface that facilitates increased interactions, offering users greater opportunities for personal narrative sharing.

The evolution of self-presentation on social media has undergone a substantial transformation since the advent of platforms such as Facebook. Originally centered around text, the introduction of visual content has emerged as a defining characteristic of how individuals shape their digital identities. Self-presentation for this research purpose is limited to photos and videos in this section. Individuals shape their online personas based on the impressions they wish to convey, considering their perceived audiences. In a study by Counts and Stecher (2009), participants were asked to rate their profile and personality dimensions after creating a simulated social media profile. The results revealed that 96% of participants emphasized personality traits such as calmness, consideration, intelligence, or uniqueness. Two crucial concepts

associated with self-presentation on social media are 'impression management' and 'self-branding,' closely intertwined, with the former serving as actions that achieve the latter. Marwick (2013b, p. 166-167) defines personal branding as the application of marketing strategies to individuals, creating an authentic yet business-friendly image, referred to as the "edited self."

According to Sertkaya (2022, p.30), in addition to shaping how users wish to be perceived by others, online self-presentation is intricately linked to the specific platform being used. Not all social media platforms serve identical social purposes; they offer varied communication modes and channels. For example, Instagram primarily revolves around visual content, contrasting with Twitter (now called X), which is predominantly used for textual content. In 2023, the Instagram team unveiled Threads, a new social media platform tailored for sharing text updates and engaging in public conversations. With Threads, users have the option to log in using their Instagram credentials. Posts on this platform can comprise up to 500 characters and may include various multimedia elements such as links, photos, and videos of up to 5 minutes in duration (Meta Newsroom). Users can opt to use Threads with or without a profile, with the latter option restricted to posting content or engaging with existing discussions. Individuals tend to present themselves differently on these platforms because "different types of software invoke different social contexts" (Marwick, 2013a, p. 358). However, users are not entirely restricted by the functionalities offered by a platform, as highlighted by Albury (2018, p. 448). They have the ability to devise innovative approaches to serve their objectives. For instance, despite not being the platform's 'official' purpose, individuals utilize Facebook and other social media platforms to seek sexual or romantic partners (p. 445).

Studies highlight a noteworthy shift toward a visually driven culture, wherein users employ images and videos as potent means of self-expression (Manago, Graham, Greenfield, and Salimkhan, 2008; Krämer & Winter, 2008). Photographs serve as instruments of self-presentation, effectively communicating and embodying various identities. On platforms like Facebook, they are frequently shared in different formats such as profile pictures, photo albums, or wall posts, offering users versatile means of expressing and shaping their online personas (Sertkaya, 2022).

In a study involving Spanish individuals aged 14 to 21, it was found that 70% of participants exclusively posted selfies on their Facebook profiles, with this trend being particularly prevalent among underage users (Sarabia & Estévez, 2016). Rettberg (2014, p. 80) highlights a significant aspect of selfies, noting that individuals often enjoy them due to the sense of control they afford throughout the entire process. Some scholars, such as Tiidenberg (2014), have viewed selfies positively, arguing that they offer an empowering potential. Tiidenberg suggests that self-shooting allows users to exert control over their body aesthetics, enabling them to construct themselves as "sexy" or "beautiful." The rise of video content on social media platforms introduces a dynamic dimension to self-presentation. Videos, whether short clips or longer narratives, allow users to engage in storytelling, offering a more immersive and authentic glimpse into their lives. Studies have explored the impact of video content on audience perception and have identified it as a powerful tool for conveying emotions, experiences, and cultural narratives (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2011).

2.1.4 <u>Gender Differences in Self-Presentation</u>

Cultural perceptions of gender play a crucial role in shaping children's beliefs and self-concepts, influenced by their daily interactions with peers, family, and media (Leaper & Friedman, 2007). As adolescents enter a phase marked by burgeoning sexuality and the emergence of matchmaking goals, gender-related self-perceptions become increasingly significant (Hannover, 2000). In the transition to emerging adulthood, gender continues to hold a prominent place, influencing individuals' considerations of future family and career roles (Archer, 1985). This developmental stage, as outlined by Arnett (2015), often becomes a period of exploration, where individuals engage with various romantic partners and may choose to delay marriage until later in life. Soron and Tarafder (2015) found that the utilization of social media platforms like Facebook is correlated with diverse socio-demographic factors, including age, gender, marital status, and professional or educational background. These factors can significantly shape the ways in which individuals engage with and use Facebook. The landscape of self-presentation on social media is inherently shaped by gender dynamics. Notably, the absence of physical and auditory gender cues in online communication provides context where men and women navigate a more equitable environment (Herring, 2003), contributing to nuanced differences in content perception. This section delves into the findings of studies that explore how men and women engage in the presentation of self, shedding light on the nuanced differences in the perception of content on social media platforms.

Studies by Manago et al. (2008) and Krämer & Winter (2008) have delved into the intricate ways in which users, based on their gender, curate, and engage with content on platforms like Facebook. It is reported that female users spent more time

on Facebook, and they were also perceived to be more socially engaged (Sertkaya, 2022). In terms of gender influence, Sertkaya (2022) expressed that physical attractiveness was a preoccupation for female users. Male users were perceived to place less emphasis on good looks and more importance on items such as their car, scenery, or friends (Sertkaya, 2022). This observation may be attributed to the tendency of females to be more concerned about how their appearance influences others. The findings from the research conducted by Atallah Alenezi, Warda Hamed, Ibrahim Elhehe, and Rania El-Etreby (2023) support the conclusions drawn by Chaplin and Aldao (2013), indicating that girls tend to utilize more adaptive emotion regulation strategies compared to boys. Specifically, girls are more inclined towards employing strategies like re-evaluation and active coping, while showing less reliance on maladaptive strategies such as rumination and suppression. Moreover, in line with the findings of McRae, Ochsner, Mauss, Gabrieli, and Gross (2008), it has been observed that women demonstrate a higher propensity to effectively use positive emotions to reappraise negative emotions, indicating a greater capacity for emotional regulation among female individuals.

Transgender individuals are gaining visibility in online media platforms, including websites and social media, resulting in a diverse array of real-life representations, which are increasingly positive (Ghazali & Nor, 2012; Heinz, 2012; Phillips, 2006). Scholars have approached the study of Facebook from various angles, including further analysis of its interface (Ivcevic & Ambady, 2012), examination of identity construction on the platform (Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin, 2008), and comparison of self-presentation between LinkedIn and Facebook (Van Dijk, 2013). Research conducted by Nesi, Wolff, and Hunt (2019) has revealed that youth who

identify as LGBTQ are more inclined to have online friends compared to their non-LGBTQ counterparts. Additionally, they tend to perceive these online friendships as a significant source of emotional support. Prior research on visual self-presentation has identified gender differences in the quantity of photos shared. Mendelson and Papacharissi (2011) conducted a qualitative analysis of approximately 21,000 Facebook photos of college students, revealing that female users had nearly four times more photos, including those posted by themselves and others, compared to male users. Similarly, Riu and Stefanone (2013) observed that female users were more inclined to share photos, exert control over photos tagged by others, and make efforts to manage their images in comparison to male users.

Although female users tend to prioritize attractiveness in their self-presentation, research indicates that male users are also experiencing growing pressure to adhere to beauty standards. Manago et al. (2008) discovered that there was a rising expectation for males to present themselves as attractive, despite disapproval expressed by both male and female participants regarding men's pursuit of beauty. In their 2015 study (Kapidzic & Herring, 2015) examining profile pictures on an English-language chat site, scholars found that white boys, in particular, were prone to exhibiting seductive behaviors (p. 967). The act of sharing topless photos and showcasing muscular male bodies was perceived as a means to signal heterosexual desirability and gain recognition, as reported by some teenagers aged 12-15 in interviews conducted by Harvey and Ringrose (2015) in the UK. Despite many studies revealing differences in self-presentation between male and female individuals, there is limited knowledge and research comparing self-presentation behaviors among male, female, and LGBTQ+ individuals, especially concerning their

usage of photos and videos on Facebook. Therefore, this research aims to address this gap in the literature by exploring how individuals across different gender identities self-present through visual media.

2.1.5 Media Exposure and Mental Health

Media exposure, particularly through social media platforms like Facebook, has become increasingly prevalent in modern society, significantly shaping individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. In the current fast-paced and competitive environment of news dissemination, slightly more than half of American adults indicate receiving news through social media platforms "often" or "sometimes," according to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center from August 31 to September 7, 2020. The extensive use of social media has been associated with various mental health outcomes, including depression and low self-esteem, particularly among young people. Research indicates that social networking sites can have adverse effects on mental health, including increased levels of anxiety, sleep disturbances, and a diminished sense of community in offline settings (Cataldo, Lepri, Neoh, & Esposito, 2021).

Moreover, the constant connectivity and information overload eased by social media can worsen stress and anxiety, further affecting individuals' mental well-being. Studies have shown that prolonged exposure to social media, characterized by frequent scrolling and engagement with content, is linked to increased depressive symptoms and decreased overall psychological well-being. Research on news consumption and emotional responses suggests that increased exposure to the latest

headlines, whether through traditional news outlets or highlighted on social media, can negatively impact mental health (Huff, 2022). For instance, a study conducted by Hwang, Borah, Shah, & Brauer (2021) surveyed 2,251 adults in the spring of 2020 and found that individuals who frequently sought information about COVID-19 across various mediums, such as television, newspapers, and social media, reported higher levels of emotional distress.

Many LGBTQ individuals reside in environments where diversity in sexuality and gender is not accepted. LGBTQ individuals face heightened risks of mental health issues and related behaviors, including suicidal thoughts, self-harm, anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Russell & Fish, 2016). Additionally, LGBTQ populations are more susceptible to experiencing violence, discrimination, and adversity (Meyer, 2016; Higa, Hoppe, Lindhorst, Mincer, Beadnell, and Morrison, 2014). Specifically, LGBTQ youth encounter a higher prevalence of victimization compared to their non-LGBTQ peers, primarily due to increased exposure to prejudice and violence in educational settings (Meyer, 2016). Addressing stressors among LGBTQ youths has been linked to a decreased risk of poor mental health, including depression and suicidal ideation (Bond & Figueroa-Caballero, 2016).

Other research indicates that establishing supportive networks and expressing LGBTQ identity without stigma or discrimination contributes to a reduction in mental health issues, encompassing anxiety, depression, addictive behaviors, and suicidal ideation (Russell & Fish, 2016; Collier, van Beusekom, Bos, & Sandfort, 2013). It was reported that excessive social media engagement among LGBTQ youths was correlated with heightened feelings of loneliness and heightened sensitivity (Ceglarek

& Ward, 2016). Additionally, dependency on social media platforms was associated with poorer academic performance, sleep disturbances, and mental health issues (Tsitsika, Tzavela, Janikian, Ólafsson, Iordache, Schoenmakers, Tzavara, & Richardson, 2014; Wolniczak, Cáceres-DelAguila, Palma-Ardiles, Arroyo, Solís-Visscher, Paredes-Yauri, Mego-Aquije, & Bernabe-Ortiz, 2013).

Social networking platforms like Facebook and Instagram have taken proactive steps to address instances of emotional distress or potential suicide risks among users. For example, Facebook introduced the Emotional Health feature (see Figure 2.3) in 2020, which serves as a centralized resource for users to access tips and information from experts, including well-known organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). These resources cover a range of topics including COVID-19, depression, emotional crisis, grief and loss, healthy habits, and stress and anxiety.

Additionally, the feature provides access to helpline numbers for the Samaritans based on the user's current location. Although the resource center is no longer part of the in-app feature, people can still access the resources through this link facebook.com/emotional health. This demonstrates a significant effort by Facebook to support users facing mental health challenges, underscoring their commitment to user well-being. Figure 2.3 presents a screenshot of Emotional Health Resource Center showing different mental health resources on Facebook, www.facebook.com/emotional_health.

Figure 2.3: Facebook Resource Center, Emotional Health
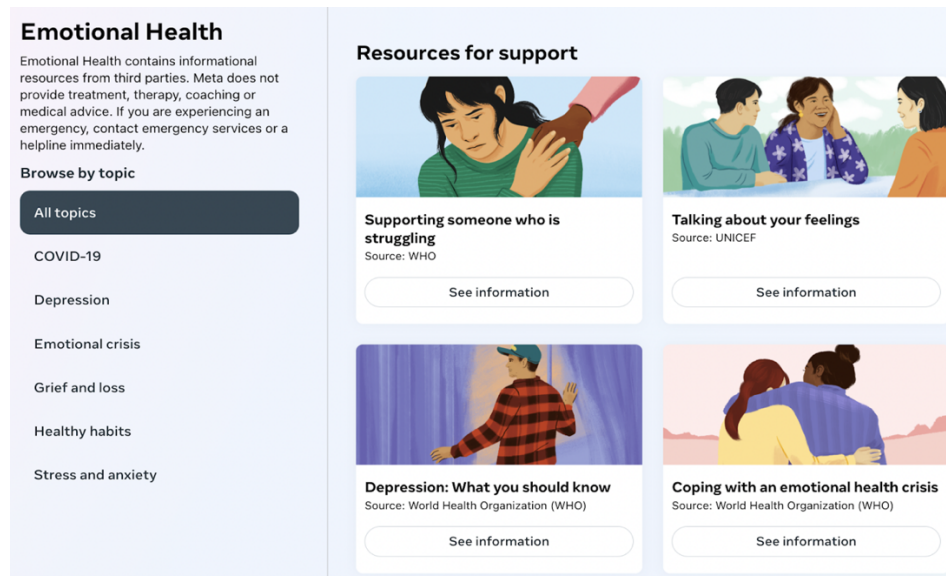
Source: Emotional Health (Facebook Resource Center). (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/emotional_health

2.1.6 Media Exposure and Self-Esteem

Numerous studies have delved into the effects of social media on mental health, with a focus on how social comparisons play a role. The research has uncovered various adverse effects, such as decreased life satisfaction, heightened feelings of isolation, and body image concerns. These findings stem from studies conducted by Lup, Trub & Rosenthal (2015), Tiggemannn and Zaccardo (2015), Liu and Baumeister (2016), Appel, Marker & Gnambs (2020), and Pedalino and Camerini (2022). However, the link between social media use and self-esteem has produced mixed results. While some studies have reported negative associations (Tiggemannn and Zaccardo, 2015; Liu and Baumeister, 2016), others have found positive (Gonzales

and Hancock, 2011) or insignificant correlations (Liu and Baumeister, 2016; Appel, Marker & Gnambs, 2020).

Recent studies suggested that Goffman's theory of self-presentation is applicable to the online space, particularly within the context of social media usage (Mahmud & Wong, 2021). The online environment can be metaphorically likened to a stage, influencing contemporary social rituals and interactions (Goffman, 1959). Social media platforms, through their features such as edited profile pictures and emojis, encourage users to engage in continuous, selective self-presentation, aimed at enhancing or concealing aspects of their online personas. Moreover, online users frequently engage in the fabrication of personal information, including lists of interests (Liu, 2007) and the number of connections or friends (Dynel, 2016; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). This behavior is aimed at seeking self-confidence and validation, contributing to the perpetuation of an idealized version of oneself. The prevalence of such practices has led to the adoption of new social norms and conventions by millennials on social media platforms, thus significantly impacting their behavior and interactions within the broader social world (Boyd, 2014; Doster, 2018; Malvini Redden & Way, 2017). This underscores the profound influence of social media on our societal functioning. Fuchs and Trottier (2015) argue that the internet has made our lives simultaneously available and traceable, with the remnants of what we share online becoming an imprinted version of our virtual or online identities. The pervasive use of social media as a communication tool has established the ideal standard of self-representation (Mascheroni, Vincent, & Jimenez, 2015). Millennial students, in particular, feel that social media provides a platform for

different portrayals of the self, making them feel more confident and less cautious

(Mahmud, Ramachandiran, & Ismail, 2018).

In their study, Shaw and Grant (2002) examined the connection between

Facebook usage and self-esteem. They discovered that various factors are linked to

self-esteem and are directly influenced by high Facebook usage, resulting in indirectly

reported low self-esteem. Self-esteem scores fluctuate when loneliness, depression,

and social support are affected. Interestingly, self-esteem may not change as rapidly

as loneliness, depression, or social support do. Depression and loneliness are crucial

in understanding self-esteem, given their strong correlations with each other when

Facebook usage is high. It's important to note that some individuals may experience

feelings of loneliness, depression, and low self-support while maintaining normal self-

esteem levels. However, these other variables have a more pronounced effect on self-

esteem when depression, loneliness, and lack of support are prevalent (Shaw & Grant,

2002).

Facebook serves as an intriguing case study regarding personal identity in the

context of the internet. Unlike other social networking platforms, Facebook users

employ their actual names and strive to authentically represent themselves (Ellis,

2010). According to Ellis, when users express "what's on their mind" or update their

status on Facebook, they are constructing a portrayal of self, shaped by their prior

socialization experiences. In her analysis, Dijck (2013) asserts that Facebook

primarily serves the purpose of facilitating personal self-presentation. She argues that

the Timeline format, with its chronological arrangement of posts, creates a visual

semblance akin to that of a magazine. Dijck further posits that users exhibit a

fundamental need for multiple self-narratives, each catering to distinct facets of their identities and intended for specific audiences (Dijck, 2013).

In their 2015 study, de Vries and Kuhne explored the negative impact of Facebook on individual well-being. Additionally, Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, and Chamorro-Premuzic's 2012 research suggests that self-esteem issues hinder the development of authentic relationships and mental health maintenance. Their study indicates that Facebook affects self-esteem through emotional reactions triggered by online disclosures. Individuals with lower self-esteem often seek validation and popularity through such disclosures, leading to further self-esteem decline (Anderson et al., 2012). Furthermore, encountering posts depicting others as happy or engaged in enjoyable activities may evoke envy and self-questioning among those with low self-esteem. Raymer's 2015 study found that increased Facebook exposure correlates with reduced body image satisfaction and a stronger desire for thinness. These findings highlight how social media exposure can erode self-confidence and create unrealistic appearance expectations, ultimately contributing to lower self-esteem.

2.1.7 Media Exposure and Depression

Studies have revealed that the use of social media platforms can detrimentally impact psychological well-being, largely due to the prevalence of online social comparisons (Tiggemannn and Zaccardo, 2015; Liu and Baumeister, 2016; Verduyn, Ybarra, Jonides & Résibois, 2017). Regular users often perceive others as leading happier and more successful lives (de Vries, Möller, Wieringa, Eigenraam & Hamelink, 2017; Midgley, Thai, Lockwood, Kovacheff & Page-Gould 2021). This

perception is exacerbated by a phenomenon known as the social media positivity bias (Schreurs and Vandenbosch, 2021), where individuals selectively present an excessively positive portrayal of themselves online. This tendency is particularly pronounced on platforms that prioritize visual imagery, allowing users to craft a seemingly authentic self-image (Bell, 2019). According to K. Kircaburun (2016), depression is a significant health issue in contemporary society. As technology increasingly becomes a necessity rather than a luxury, it has turned into a primary income source for various influencers and content creators. Nonetheless, it is crucial to manage and consider the consequences of this trend. Understanding the direct and indirect impacts of social media usage on depression is essential (Azem, Alwani, Lucas, Alsaadi, Njihia, Bibi, Alzubaidi, & Househ, 2023). Parrott (2020) said, media exposure tends to increase the risk of depression through several mechanisms. These include negative social comparison, exposure to content that reinforces negative thoughts or moods, perpetuation of stigmatization, and the displacement of healthier activities such as exercise and face-to-face social interaction. Additionally, users may alter their appearance using technology to conform to U.S. beauty standards, which can negatively impact their behaviors and attitudes when they don't align with these idealized images. Parrott claimed that the excessive use of digital media has raised concerns about its potential indirect contribution to depression by replacing healthier activities such as physical exercise and face-to-face social interactions, which are known to reduce the risk of depression. While current research shows that media exposure tends to substitute physical activities, receiving less attention is its effect on mental health. Furthermore, studies have revealed a correlation between increased social media usage and a higher likelihood of self-reported mental health issues

among adolescents. Conversely, adolescents who spend more time on non-screen activities, such as social interactions and physical exercise, are less likely to report mental health issues (Twenge, Joiner, Rogers, & Martin, 2018). Additionally, further research suggests that social media use might displace sleep, thereby affecting mental health, while excessive preoccupation with social media could hinder sleep quality.

According to the findings of Gong, Yi, Yu, Fan, Gao, Jin, Zeng, Li & Ma (2023), excessive media usage among individuals aged 19–40 years is associated with depression. This aligns with previous research, such as the study by Primack, Shensa, Sidani, Escobar-Vier & Fine (2021), which found that individuals who use social media the most are three times more likely to experience depression compared to those who use it the least. Moreover, other studies have shown a positive correlation between media use and depression, indicating that the more time individuals spend on media platforms, the higher their likelihood of experiencing depressive symptoms (Shensa, Escobar-Viera, Sidani, Bowman, Marshal & Primack, 2017; Scherr, 2018; Yoon, Kleinman, Mertz & Brannick, 2019). Research conducted on teenagers in Taiwan Province, China, revealed a similar trend, indicating that increased mobile phone usage among adolescents is associated with a greater risk of suicidal ideation (Yang, Yen, Ko, Cheng & Yen, 2010). This association may be attributed to the notion that excessive engagement with media platforms reduces opportunities for meaningful face-to-face interactions (Banjanin, Banjanin, Dimitrijevic & Pantic, 2015; Whaite, Shensa, Sidani, Colditz & Primack, 2018), consequently heightening the risk of depression (Aydin, Kocak, Shaw, Buber, Akpinar & Younis, 2021).

Studies have highlighted a robust connection between excessive Facebook usage and adverse effects on mental health, along with the emergence of physical and

psychological problems that can detrimentally impact overall psychological well-being. Specifically, research has indicated that excessive Facebook use is associated with higher rates of depression (Hormes, 2016; Marino, Gini, Vieno, & Spada, 2018).

As such, understanding the complex interplay between media exposure and mental health is crucial for developing effective interventions and strategies to promote positive mental health outcomes in the digital age.

2.2 Related Theories

This section reviews two related theories including the Cultivation Theory and the Social Comparison Theory.

2.1 Cultivation Theory

Social media platforms often serve as breeding grounds for social comparison, where individuals compare themselves to others based on various aspects of their lives, including appearance, achievements, and social status. According to Choi & Kim (2021), viewing "positive" images on social media has the potential to elevate positive emotions and improve life satisfaction through emotional contagion. Additionally, the act of browsing through such content can prompt both contrastive social comparison and emotional contagion, particularly when individuals encounter positive and upward comparison-inducing imagery. This phenomenon, known as upward social comparison, can fuel feelings of envy and inadequacy, particularly when individuals perceive others as more successful or happier. Additionally, the curated nature of content on social media platforms can create a distorted perception of reality, leading individuals to internalize unrealistic standards and expectations.

Equally, digital disconnection, or the intentional reduction of social media use, has been associated with improved mental health outcomes. Limiting exposure to social media platforms allows individuals to disconnect from constant comparison and external validation, fostering a greater sense of self-awareness and psychological well-being.

Among young people, Facebook plays a crucial role in daily life, offering a platform for diverse content types and reshaping the way individuals interact, share information, and perceive themselves and others. Cultivation Theory suggests that constant exposure to certain media content influences individuals' perceptions and beliefs about the world. The visual, picture-oriented nature of social networking sites, combined with the ability to post comments, encourages users to view and comment on the personal photos that others share on their profiles (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009). The physical appearance of profile owners seems to significantly influence how other users perceive and comment on these images (Ringrose, 2011; Siibak, 2009; Wang, Moon, Kwon, Evans, & Stefanone, 2010). For instance, a survey of Estonian adolescents revealed that participants considered good looks the most important factor in determining popularity on social networking sites (Siibak, 2009). In comparison to males, females are subject to more pronounced scrutiny of their physical appearance on social networking platforms (Manago, Graham, Greenfield, & Salimkhan, 2008). Furthermore, a greater emphasis is placed on evaluating the physical appearance of females as opposed to males on social networking sites (Seidman & Miller, 2013).

In the context of this research, prolonged exposure to idealized self-presentations on Facebook may cultivate specific perceptions of beauty, success, and

social norms among Myanmar's youth. For example, if most content highlights

unrealistic beauty standards or portrays a consistently positive image of life,

individuals may internalize these ideals, contributing to an altered perception of

reality. This altered perception, over time, could potentially contribute to depressive

tendencies as individuals compare their own lives to these idealized standards.

2.2 Social Comparison Theory

Exposure to curated content on social media platforms, such as idealized

images and lifestyle portrayals, can contribute to unrealistic standards and

comparisons, leading to feelings of inadequacy and diminished self-worth. According

to the assumption of Social Comparison Theory, individuals determine their own

social and personal worth based on social comparisons. Psychological research

underscores the pervasive nature of social comparisons in human behavior.

Individuals tend to compare themselves to others when they receive information about

others' attributes, achievements, or failures, relating this information to their own

circumstances (Dunning & Hayes, 1996). This inclination to compare extends to self-

evaluation, as individuals often assess their own characteristics, fortunes, and

weaknesses in comparison to others (Gilbert, Giesler, Morris, 1995). Sometimes,

individuals may even engage in comparisons with individuals who do not provide

relevant information about the self. Comparisons with individuals present in one's

immediate social environment, such as friends or peers, can significantly influence

self-evaluation and well-being (Gerber, Wheeler & Suls, 2018; Marsh & Parker,

1984; Zell & Alicke, 2010). Zell and Alicke (2010) posit that this local dominance

effect arises from the evolutionary importance of knowing how one compares to close

social competitors. In our evolutionary past, understanding our standing within small groups may have been critical for survival and social interaction. Nevertheless, there are instances where individuals do not necessarily pursue accurate feedback about themselves. Instead, they may endeavor to cultivate and uphold a positive self-image. One significant method to achieve this is by comparing oneself to others who are perceived as being worse-off (Crusius, Mussweiler & Corcoran, 2022). Engaging in such downward comparisons may serve as an effective strategy for self-protection (Wills, 1981).

Several reasons underlie why people compare themselves to others. Social comparisons can serve as an efficient cognitive tool for acquiring self-knowledge without overstretching cognitive resources (Corcoran & Mussweiler, 2010; Mussweiler & Epstude, 2009). Festinger (1954) proposed that individuals tend to choose comparison standards who are similar to themselves on the critical dimension. This selection is crucial because only comparisons with similar standards offers diagnostic insights. Comparisons with dissimilar others would yield ambiguous results, according to Festinger's hypothesis. Social comparison theory speculates that we assess ourselves by comparing with a selected reference group to define if we are inferior or superior (Adler & Adler, 2015). Visual content created and shared on social media is a crucial method for crafting an online impression, with millennials being among the most avid users. This means that individuals engage in comparisons with others to assess their own social standing and self-worth. In recent years, there has been a lot of focus on understanding the impact of social comparisons on social media. Many studies suggest that platforms like Facebook and Instagram not only provide plenty of opportunities for comparing ourselves to others, but also present a

distorted view of social reality (Crusius, Mussweiler & Corcoran, 2022). However, new research on the effects of social media suggests that taking a completely negative view of it may not be justified. It is important to note that while passive use of social media has been linked to negative outcomes resulting from comparisons with others (Verduyn, Lee, Park, Shablack, Orvell, Bayer, Ybarra, Jonides & Kross, 2015), actively engaging with social networks could be a valuable way to build social connections and contribute to overall well-being (Appel, Gerlach & Crusius, 2016; Verduyn, Ybarra, Jonides & Résibois, 2017)

On Facebook, users often encounter curated self-presentations that highlight the positive aspects of others' lives. This constant exposure to selectively presented content fosters social comparisons among youth from Myanmar. If individuals perceive that their own lives fall short in comparison to the idealized representations on Facebook, it may lead to feelings of inadequacy, lower self-esteem, and contribute to the development of depressive tendencies. The persistent nature of these social comparisons within the online environment can significantly impact the mental well-being of young users. As Burmese youth residing in Thailand navigate these comparisons and idealized self-presentations, it creates a social environment where unrealistic standards can significantly influence mental health outcomes, potentially leading to higher levels of depression.

2.3 Hypothesis/Hypotheses

Building upon the conceptual framework outlined in the previous section, this study seeks to investigate the following four research hypotheses:

HP#1: Exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly influences self-esteem among Burmese youth residing in Thailand.

HP#2: Exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly influences depression experienced by Burmese youth residing in Thailand.

HP#3: Gender moderates the impact of exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on Burmese youth's self-esteem.

HP#4: Gender moderates the impact of exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on Burmese youth's depression.

These hypotheses aim to elucidate the relationship between Burmese youth's exposure to self-presentation content on Facebook and its potential effects on their self-esteem and depression, and to test whether gender moderates such impact on Burmese youth.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework (see Figure 2.4) guiding this study draws on two key theories: Cultivation Theory and Social Comparison Theory. These theories provide a theoretical basis for understanding how exposure to content on social media platforms, such as photos and videos, may influence youth depression and self-esteem, with gender serving as a moderator in this relationship.

On one hand, the Cultivation Theory posits that prolonged exposure to media content shapes individuals' perceptions of reality, leading to the cultivation of specific beliefs and attitudes. In the context of this study, Cultivation Theory suggests that repeated exposure to idealized or curated content on social media platforms may

contribute to the development of unrealistic standards of beauty, success, and happiness, which in turn may impact individuals' self-esteem and psychological well-being.

On the other hand, the Social Comparison Theory posits that individuals evaluate themselves by comparing their abilities, opinions, and attributes to those of others. On social media platforms like Facebook, individuals are exposed to a wide range of content posted by their peers, including photos and videos highlighting achievements, experiences, and lifestyles. The Social Comparison Theory suggests that such exposure may lead individuals to engage in upward or downward social comparisons, influencing their perceptions of self-worth and contributing to feelings of low self-esteem and depression.

The independent variable in this study is exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook, specifically in the form of photos and videos. This variable represents the extent to which individuals are exposed to idealized or curated content on platforms like Facebook. Gender serves as a moderating variable in the relationship between exposure to content and its impact on youth depression and low self-esteem. Gender may influence how individuals interpret and respond to social media content and the societal norms and expectations that shape their self-perceptions.

The dependent variables in this study are self-esteem and depression. These variables represent individuals' subjective evaluations of their own worth and psychological well-being, which may be influenced by their exposure to content on social media platforms and such impacts are assumed to be moderated by gender.

Figure 2.4 Conceptual Framework
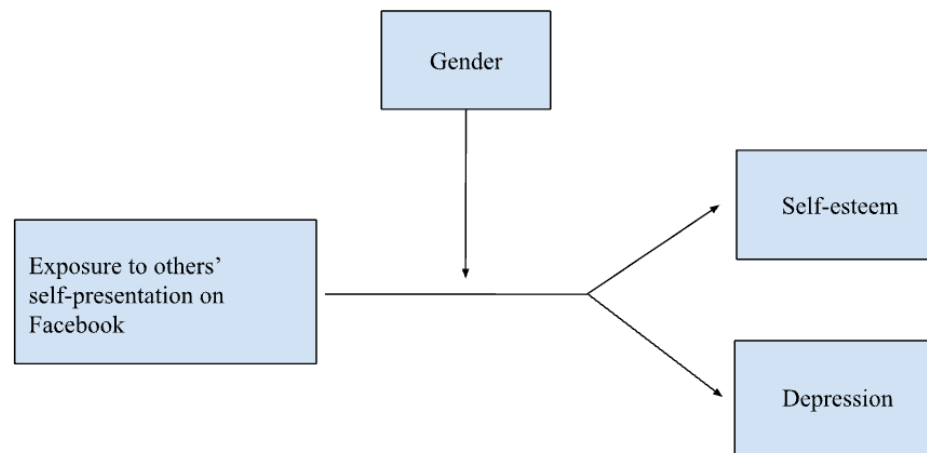
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This section describes research design, population and sample selection, and data collection procedure. It also contains research instrument, instrument pretest, and data analysis, together with validity and reliability of the measurement.

3.1 Research Design

The primary goal of this study is to gather a substantial volume of data to comprehensively analyze the relationship between others' self-presentation on Facebook and youth depression among Burmese individuals in Thailand. The quantitative research approach has been chosen due to its alignment with the study's objectives and its efficacy in examining these relationships within a large population. Its strength lies in generating factual and reliable outcome data that can often be applied to larger populations (Verhoef & Casebeer, 1997), making it particularly suitable for this research topic.

3.1.1 Quantitative Approach

The quantitative approach is particularly suited to the scope and nature of this investigation for several reasons. Quantitative surveys enable the execution of a broader study, involving a larger participant pool, facilitating more accurate generalization of results across a wider demographic (Mander, 2022). Firstly, quantitative research is highly effective in establishing cause-and-effect relationships,

which is essential for understanding the impact of others' self-presentation on

Facebook on youth depression (Verhoef & Casebeer, 1997). This approach allows for

the testing of specific hypotheses and the collection of measurable, objective data,

facilitating rigorous statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). Secondly,

quantitative methods enable the collection of data from a large sample, enhancing the

generalizability of the findings. This is particularly important in this study, as it aims

to draw conclusions that are applicable to the broader population of Burmese youth in

Thailand. By ensuring a broad and inclusive representation, the study can produce

findings that are more reflective of the target population's experiences and perceptions

(Babbie, 2010).

Moreover, the quantitative approach is efficient in terms of both time and

resources. Given the dispersed nature of the target population and potential logistical

challenges, quantitative methods, particularly surveys, allow for the rapid collection

of data from a large number of participants. This efficiency is critical in ensuring that

the study can be completed within the given time frame while still gathering

comprehensive data (Fowler, 2014). Finally, the structured nature of quantitative

research is well-suited for hypothesis testing. By employing standardized instruments

and statistical techniques, the study can rigorously test the proposed hypotheses about

the relationship between Facebook self-presentation and youth depression, providing

robust and reliable results (Neuman, 2014). Given the broad scope of this research,

which centers on the Burmese youth population in Thailand, a quantitative approach

is strategically suitable. The primary advantage of adopting a quantitative research

approach lies in its utilization of statistical data, which saves time and resources. As

asserted by Bryman (2016), quantitative research places substantial emphasis on

numerical data throughout the data collection and analysis processes, reducing the time and effort required for extensive textual descriptions. The application of statistical packages for social science, such as SPSS, enables the calculation and interpretation of data (including numbers, percentages, and measurable figures) with computational efficiency (Gorard, 2001; Connolly, 2007). This methodological choice aligns seamlessly with the research's objective of delving into the quantitative aspects of self-presentation's impact on mental health. It stands out as a fitting and effective approach for this specific inquiry, facilitating a systematic analysis of numerical data to comprehensively understand the dynamics between Facebook usage, self-esteem, and youth depression among Burmese youth in Thailand. By employing this method, the research aims to inclusively capture diverse perspectives and experiences, thereby providing a thorough and nuanced overview of Facebook's influence on youth depression in this demographic.

3.1.2 Research Method - Survey Research

The research method being used for this study is survey research. Given the youthful demographic focus of this study, employing in-depth interviews or focus group discussions might be logistically challenging and time-consuming. The rationale for selecting survey research includes the following points: 1) Surveys offer a standardized method of data collection, ensuring that all participants respond to the same set of questions in a uniform manner. This standardization helps to minimize potential biases and ensures consistency in the data collected (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). 2) Surveys can be administered to a large number of respondents, either online or in person, facilitating the collection of data from a substantial portion

of the target population. This scalability is crucial for achieving a representative

sample of Burmese youth in Thailand, thereby enhancing the study's external validity

(Groves, Fowler, Couper, Lepkowski, Singer & Tourangeau, 2009). 3) Given the

sensitive nature of mental health topics, surveys can be administered anonymously,

offering respondents a sense of privacy and security. This anonymity can encourage

more honest and accurate reporting of feelings and behaviors related to depression

(Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). 4) The use of surveys is highly efficient, both in terms of

time and cost. Surveys can be distributed widely and collected quickly, allowing for a

large sample size without incurring significant expenses or logistical challenges

(Fowler, 2014). By integrating these methodologies, this study aims to provide a

comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how others' self-presentation on

Facebook impacts youth depression among Burmese individuals in Thailand, using

robust quantitative methods to ensure reliability and validity in the findings.

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

The target population for this research encompasses young Burmese individuals

in Thailand, specifically those aged 18 to 28, including university or college students

as well as employees, both private and public sectors. The focus is on Burmese

individuals within the specified age range who actively use Facebook, without any

gender restrictions. The rationale for selecting this population is grounded in the

prevalence of social media usage within the specified age group. Recent statistics

indicate high social media usage among young people in this demographic, aligning

with the research objective to investigate the impact of others' self-presentation on

Facebook on youth self-esteem and depression. This provides valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of young Burmese individuals in Thailand within this age range.

3.2.1 Population Selection

The selection of young Burmese individuals aged 18 to 28 is based on the significant role that social media, particularly Facebook, plays in their daily lives. According to Statista (2023), over 80% of young adults in Southeast Asia are active social media users, with Facebook being one of the most popular platforms. This age group is particularly susceptible to the influences of social media, as they are in a critical developmental stage where self-identity and self-esteem are being shaped (Boyd, 2014). Additionally, focusing on this demographic allows the study to explore the nuances of social media impact within a culturally specific context, offering a deeper understanding of how cultural background intersects with digital behavior and mental health outcomes (Chua & Chang, 2016).

3.2.2 Sampling Method

To ensure a comprehensive and representative sample, a multistage sampling method will be employed. Multistage sampling is advantageous as it allows for the inclusion of diverse population segments, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings (Creswell, 2014). The initial stage will involve selecting key provinces in Thailand known to have significant Burmese youth populations. This selection will be based on data from immigration organizations that track the distribution of Burmese

individuals in Thailand. Among 76 provinces in Thailand, the randomly selected provinces are Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pathum Thani, Nonthaburi, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon and Udon Thani. Within these selected provinces, a random selection of communities or neighborhoods will be made. This step ensures that the sample captures a broad cross-section of the target population, including urban and semi-urban areas where social media usage patterns might differ. Subsequently, individuals within these communities will be conveniently or snowballing selected to participate in the survey.

3.2.3 <u>Sample Size</u>

To determine the sample size, the study applies a formula considering a 90% confidence level (Z=1.645) and an estimated proportion of the population (p) of 0.5, with a 5% (0.05) margin of error. The required sample size is approximately 271 participants. However, to account for potential non-responses or incomplete surveys, the study aims to conduct survey questionnaires with 280 participants. This slight over-sampling ensures robustness and compensates for any data attrition, maintaining the integrity of the research findings (Groves et al., 2009). The selected population and sampling method are designed to capture a representative and diverse cross-section of young Burmese individuals in Thailand. This approach ensures that the study's findings will be robust and applicable to the broader population, providing valuable insights into the impact of Facebook self-presentation on youth depression. By employing a rigorous multistage sampling method and calculating an appropriate sample size with a buffer for non-responses, the research design aims to deliver reliable and generalizable results.

3.3 <u>Research Instrument</u>

The primary instrument for data collection is a self-administered questionnaire. This tool is chosen for its ability to capture quantitative responses systematically and efficiently. Data were collected via an online platform, using Google Form. It was designed to assess the impact of exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook on self-esteem and depression among Burmese youth residing in Thailand. It consists of five sections as followings:

<u>Section A: Demographic Information</u>

Respondents were asked to provide basic demographic information, including age, gender, monthly income, duration of residence, and the province they currently stay in Thailand which are essential for this research purpose. Multiple choices format is used for answering these questions.

<u>Section B: Facebook Usage</u>

This section includes questions about the frequency and duration of Facebook use, as well as the types of content respondents are exposed to on Facebook. These questions were designed to capture a comprehensive picture of participants' Facebook activity. In terms of duration, respondents will be requested to report their duration of using Facebook based on a five-point scale – (1) Very short (Less than 15 minutes per day) (2) Short (16 – 59 minutes per day), (3) Medium (1 – 2 hours per day), (4) Long (3 – 4 hours per day), and (5) Very long (More than 4 hours per day).

In terms of frequency, respondents will be requested to report their frequency of using Facebook based on a five-point scale – (1) Less than once a week, (2) Once a week, (3) A few times a week, (4) Once a day, and (5) Multiple times a day.

As for the types of content, respondents will be requested to report the types of content that they are exposed to on Facebook on a regular basis.

Section C: Self-Presentation on Facebook

Questions in this section focus on the respondents' behaviors related to others' self-presentation on Facebook, such as posting photos and videos, as well as what type of content they post. Some of the questions are from the previous study of exposure to social media, such as Exposure to Positive Social Media Content Scale, developed by Schreurs & Vandenbosch (2021) and Social Media Use Scale (SMUS), by Lin, Wang, and Chen (2016). It consists of 11 items to align with the context of self-presentation. The scales are adopted with the 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0) Never (0 time per day), 1) Hardly (1 – 2 times per day), 2) Sometimes (3 – 4 times per day), 3) Often (5 – 6 times a day), to 4) Always (7 times or more per day).

Table 3.1: Interpretation of Mean Range for Exposure to Self-presentation Content on Facebook

Mean Range	Interpretation
1.00 - 1.80	Very low
1.81 - 2.60	Low
2.61 - 3.40	Moderate
3.41 - 4.20	High
4.21 - 5.00	Very high

Section D: Self-Esteem

To assess self-esteem, respondents were asked to rate their self-esteem using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly agree) to 4 (Strongly disagree). The items were adapted from The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), developed by Morris Rosenberg in 1965, is a widely used tool for assessing global self-esteem. It consists of 10 items. The scale measures both positive and negative feelings about the self, with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem. The RSES has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha typically ranging between 0.77 and 0.88 across various populations, indicating good to quite good reliability.

Table 3.2: Interpretation of Mean Range for Self-esteem

Mean Range	Interpretation
1.00 - 1.60	Very low
1.61 - 2.20	Low
2.21 – 2.80	Moderate
2.81 – 3.40	High
3.41 - 4.00	Very high

Section E: Depression

This section assesses depressive symptoms using the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), a widely used instrument developed by Kroenke, Spitzer, and Williams (2001). The PHQ-9 consists of 9 items, each reflecting a core symptom of depression as outlined in the DSM-IV. Respondents rate the frequency of each symptom over the past two weeks on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (nearly every day). The total score ranges from 0 to 27, with higher scores indicating greater severity of depression. The PHQ-9 has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha typically reported around 0.89 in primary care settings, indicating good reliability (Kroenke, Spitzer, & Williams, 2001).

Table 3.3: Interpretation of Mean Range for Depression

Mean Range	Interpretation
1.00 - 1.60	Very low
1.61 - 2.20	Low
2.21 – 2.80	Moderate
2.81 – 3.40	High
3.41 - 4.00	Very high

3.4 Instrument Pretest

Prior to the main data collection, the questionnaire was tested on a small sample around 20-30 respondents, similar to the target population. This pretest allows the researcher to pinpoint any potential issues with questionnaire items and adjust them accordingly for the actual study. The pretest feedback helps improve and modify the questions to make sure they are clear and consistently interpreted by all respondents. During this phase, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to evaluate internal consistency and to assess the construct validity of the instrument.

3.5 <u>Data Collection Procedure</u>

The process of creating the questionnaire began with a thorough examination of existing research on social media, self-presentation, and its psychological effects, particularly focusing on studies that have explored related concepts such as depression and self-esteem. This study utilizes established scales, including Social Media Use Scale (SMUS), by Lin, Wang, and Chen (2016), to measure the respondents' exposure to other users' self-presentation on Facebook. Furthermore, additional questions were developed to capture demographic information, social media usage patterns, and self-reported measures of depression and self-esteem. The questionnaire was carefully crafted to ensure clarity and relevance for Burmese adolescents residing in Thailand.

Survey data were collected using an online platform, allowing respondents to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. Participants were invited to take part in the survey via social media, online community groups, and educational institutions. After finishing the data collection phase, the raw data were transferred from the survey platform to a statistical software like SPSS for data analysis and processing.

Procedures for cleaning data were carried out to eliminate incomplete responses, fix data entry errors, and ready the dataset for analysis. Descriptive statistics were calculated to provide an overview of the examined variables whereas inferential statistics were used to test the proposed research hypotheses regarding effects of Burmese youths' exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook on their mental health in terms of self-esteem and depression.

3.6 <u>Data Analysis</u>

The analysis of the collected data commenced with the application of descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the participants' demographic characteristics, social media usage patterns, and self-presentation behaviors. The analysis focuses on examining the relationships between exposure to self-presentation on Facebook and the dependent variables of self-esteem and depression. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and multiple regression, were used to test the hypotheses. ANCOVA explored the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between social media exposure and psychological outcomes. Measures such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages will be employed to summarize the data in each section of the questionnaire. This approach will enable a clear understanding of the general trends within the dataset, offering preliminary insights into the patterns of Facebook usage and exposure to self-presentation among Burmese youth in Thailand.

3.7 <u>Validity and Reliability</u>

To ensure the validity and reliability of the measurements in this study, content validity was carefully selected and adapted to established scales, such as the Self-Presentation on Facebook Scale by Yang & Brown (2016), which have been validated in previous research. Additionally, the questionnaire will be reviewed by advisory to confirm that it accurately reflects the constructs being measured, such as self-presentation, depression, and self-esteem. To assess the internal consistency of the scales used, Cronbach's alpha will be calculated for each scale. A pilot study will also

be conducted with a small sample from the target population to identify any potential issues with the questionnaire and to ensure that the items consistently measure the intended constructs across different respondents.
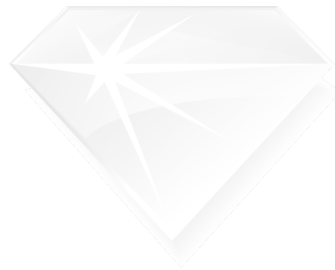
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the data analyses, including the demographic characteristics of the respondents, their Facebook usage patterns, and their experience with using Facebook for self-presentation purposes. The primary objective was to test the research hypotheses regarding influence of exposure to self-presentation content on Facebook (EXPC) on self-esteem (SEST), and on depression (DEP) among Burmese youth residing in Thailand, and another hypothesis on the role of gender as moderator of these relationships.

4.1 Respondents' Characteristics

The total number of participants who participated in the survey was 277, but 259 of them were valid (aged 18 – 28) for data analysis. This section provided an overview of the demographic characteristics of the valid participants, including their gender, age, and duration of residence in Thailand. The purpose was to describe the research samples and ensure that the demographic distribution was representative of the study's target group - Burmese youth residing in Thailand.

In terms of gender, data analysis results showed that 44.8% (n = 116) of the participants were male, 43.7% (n = 113) of them were female, 7.3% (n = 19) of them were non-binary, while the remaining 4.2% (n = 11) chose 'Prefer not to say' option. Table 4.1 illustrates the gender distribution of the samples.

Table 4.1: Samples' Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	116	44.8
Female	113	43.7
Non-binary	19	7.3
Prefer not to say	11	4.2
Total	259	100.0

In terms of age, the highest number of respondents were 25 years old (16.2%, n = 42), followed by 23-year-olds (13.5%, n = 35) as the second-largest group. Respondents with 18 years old was the smallest group (2.3%, n = 6), followed by those with 28 years old (4.2%, n = 11). Table 4.2 illustrates the distribution of respondents' ages.

Table 4.2: Samples' Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	6	2.3
19	19	7.3
20	14	5.4
21	25	9.7
22	32	12.4
23	35	13.5
24	33	12.7
25	42	16.3
26	28	10.8
27	14	5.4
28	11	4.2
Total	259	100.0

Regarding duration of residence in Thailand, 54.1% (n = 140) of the respondents reported living in Thailand for less than one year, while 40.9% (n = 106)

of them had been residing for 1-2 years, followed by those residing for 3 – 4 years

(4.6%, n = 12), and those residing for more than 4 years (0.4%, n = 1), respectively.

Table 4.3 showed samples' length of residence in Thailand.

Table 4.3: Samples' Length of Residence in Thailand

Duration of Stay	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	140	54.1
1 - 2 years	106	40.9
3 - 4 years	12	4.6
More than 4 years	1	0.4
Total	259	100.0

In terms of resident location, the majority of respondents resided in Bangkok

(56.4%, n = 146), followed by Samut Prakan province (14.3%, n = 37), Chiang Mai

(12.7%, n = 33), Pathum Thani (5.8%, n = 15), and Phuket (5.4%, n = 14). Few

respondents reside in Udon Thani (2.3%, n = 6), Samut Sakhon (2.3%, n = 6), and

Nonthaburi (0.8%, n = 2), respectively, as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Samples' Resident Location

Province	Frequency	Percent
Bangkok	146	56.4
Chiang Mai	33	12.7
Phuket	14	5.4
Pathum Thani	15	5.8
Udon Thani	6	2.3
Nonthaburi	2	0.8
Samut Prakan	37	14.3
Samut Sakhon	6	2.3
Total	259	100.0

4.1.1 Facebook Usage

As for frequency of Facebook usage, majority of them spent multiple times a day on Facebook, (56.8%, n = 147), followed by a few times a week (22.4%, n = 58), once a day (16.6%, n = 43), and once a week (4.2%, n = 11), respectively, as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Respondents' Frequency of Facebook Usage

Facebook Usage	Frequency	Percent
Multiple times a day	147	56.8
Once a day	43	16.6
A few times a week	58	22.4
Once a week	11	4.2
Total	259	100.0

In terms of average time spent on Facebook daily, majority of the respondents spent less than two hours per day. Among them, those who spent 16 – 59 minutes per day (29.3%, n = 76) and 1 – 2 hours per day (29.3%, n = 76) were in the same amount, while 12.4% of them (n = 32) spent less than 15 minutes per day. On the contrary, the respondents who spent 3 – 4 hours per day (19.3%, n = 50) and those who spent more than 4 hours per day (9.7%, n = 25) were smaller number, as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Respondents' Average Time Spent on Facebook

Duration of Usage	Frequency	Percent
Less than 15 minutes per day	32	12.4
16 – 59 minutes per day	76	29.3
1 – 2 hours per day	76	29.3
3 – 4 hours per day	50	19.3
More than 4 hours per day	25	9.7
Total	259	100.0

In addition, most respondents engaged with visual content, particularly videos, with 233 answers indicating this preference. Photos were also a common content type, as shown by 194 responses. Furthermore, 140 responses reported viewing live streams, while 108 answers indicated engagement with influencer content. Status updates were mentioned by 97 respondents, reflecting an interest in personal updates within their networks, whereas news articles received 69 responses, indicating some engagement with current events or informational content. Group discussions were the least engaged content type, with only 27 responses. These findings highlighted the prominence of visual and multimedia content in shaping users' Facebook experiences, while also indicating that textual and informational content, such as status updates,

news, and group discussions, played a smaller but still notable role in user

engagement.

Table 4.7: Type of Content Respondents' Engage on Facebook

Type of content	Frequency	Percent
Videos	233	26.85
Photos	194	22.35
Live Streams	140	16.13
Influencer Content	108	12.44
Status Updates	97	11.18
News Articles	69	7.95
Group Discussions	27	3.11
Total	868	100.00

4.2 Results of Descriptive Statistics on Examined Variables (IVs & DVs)

Descriptive statistics in terms of mean, standard deviation was computed for

describing the independent variable (exposure to others' self-presentation on

Facebook) and two dependent variables (self-esteem and depression). These statistics

offered insight into the central tendency and dispersion of the scores. In addition,

reliability analyses of these three variables revealed that all measurements of this

study were reliable, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 or higher.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of the Examined Variables

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Exposure to self-presentation	259	2.57	0.77	11	0.92
Self-esteem	259	2.65	0.44	10	0.78
Depression	259	1.25	0.53	9	0.79

Table 4.9: Interpretation for Mean Score of the Examined Variables

Variable	Mean	Interpretation
Exposure to self-presentation content	2.57	Moderate level
Self-esteem	2.65	Moderate level
Depression	1.25	Low level

4.2.1 Exposure to Self-Presentation Content

The mean score of exposure to self-presentation content on Facebook ($\bar{x}$ = 2.57, SD = 0.77) suggested that respondents experienced a moderate level of engagement with self-presentation activities on Facebook. This indicated that the participants were regularly exposed to content shared by others, such as photos, status updates, and personal achievements.

Table 4.10: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Exposure to Self-

Presentation Content on Facebook

Variable and Indicators	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Exposure to Self-Presentation on Facebook	2.57	0.77	Moderate level of exposure
The persons share posts or stories on Facebook about their exciting life (e.g., go to a party with friends, check in in cool places).	2.53	0.95	Moderate level of exposure
The persons share posts or stories on Facebook about their successful life.	2.48	0.96	Moderate level of exposure
The person looks beautiful or handsome.	2.59	1.03	Moderate level of exposure
The persons show that they are having a lot of fun.	2.63	1.03	Moderate level of exposure
The persons appear to have many friends.	2.61	1.03	Moderate level of exposure
The persons describe how great a friendship is (e.g., showing that they have much fun together).	2.58	1.02	Moderate level of exposure
The persons are doing nice things (e.g., going on a trip with family).	2.51	1.04	Moderate level of exposure
The persons show a nice or trendy clothing style.	2.57	1.02	Moderate level of exposure
The persons' body looks almost perfect (e.g., slim or muscled).	2.54	1.02	Moderate level of exposure
The persons share posts or stories on Facebook showcasing a nice holiday they took.	2.59	1.00	Moderate level of exposure
The persons show their romantic relationship looks perfect (e.g., that it is clear they are in love and do happy things together).	2.62	1.08	Moderate level of exposure

4.2.2 <u>Self-Esteem</u>

Respondents reported a moderate level of self-esteem, as indicated by a mean score of 2.65 (SD = 0.44). This finding suggested that the participants generally perceived themselves quite positively and displayed a balanced sense of self-worth.

For one question asking respondents to rate how they would respect themselves as an individual, mean score reveals that their perceived self-esteem is considered slightly high ($\bar{x}$ = 3.20, SD = 0.86). When run the Pearson's Correlation to analyze correlation between this perception and average score of self-esteem measurement, it was found that correlation of both variables is significantly, but weakly positive (r = 0.172, p < 0.01).

Table 4.11: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Self-Esteem

Variable and Indicators	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Self-Esteem	2.65	0.44	Moderate self-esteem
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	2.73	0.74	Moderate self-esteem
At times, I think I am no good at all.	2.42	0.72	Moderate self-esteem
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	2.77	0.75	Moderate self-esteem

(Continued)

Table 4.11 (Continued): Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Self-Esteem

I am able to do things as well as most other people.	2.75	0.77	Moderate self-esteem
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	2.39	0.79	Moderate self-esteem
I certainly feel useless at times.	2.61	0.79	Moderate self-esteem
I feel that I am a person of self-worth at least on an equal plane with others.	2.63	0.73	Moderate self-esteem
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	2.66	0.85	Moderate self-esteem
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	2.34	0.78	Moderate self-esteem
I take a positive attitude towards myself.	2.51	0.89	Moderate self-esteem

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4.2.3 Depression

The mean depression score was relatively low ($\bar{x}$ = 1.25, SD = 0.53), indicating that the majority of respondents experienced only mild depressive symptoms. This suggested that, overall, the participants were not significantly affected by mental problem in terms of depression.

Table 4.12 Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Depression

Variable and Indicators	x̄	S.D.	Interpretation
Depression	1.25	0.53	Low depression
Little interest or pleasure in doing things.	1.34	0.84	Low depression
Feeling down, depressed or hopeless.	1.26	0.84	Low depression
Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much.	1.34	0.90	Low depression
Feeling tired or having little energy.	1.47	0.89	Low depression
Poor appetite or overeating.	1.27	0.82	Low depression
Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down.	1.25	0.88	Low depression
Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television.	1.26	0.93	Low depression
Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual.	1.10	0.83	Low depression
Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way.	0.99	0.90	Low depression

4.3 <u>Results of the Hypothesis Testing</u>

   This section presented the results of inferential statistical analyses used to test

the proposed research hypotheses. It included the results of the regression analysis to

examine the relationship between exposure to self-presentation content and self-esteem, and between exposure to self-presentation content and depression.

4.3.1 Hypothesis 1 (HP#1)

According to the HP#1: Exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly influences self-esteem among Burmese youth residing in Thailand, the Linear Regression Analysis was conducted to test this research hypothesis. The result revealed that respondents' exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly predicts their self-esteem ($F = 17.6$, $p < 0.001$). The results suggested exposure to self-presentation can predict only 6.4% of their self-esteem ($R^2 = 0.064$, $\beta = 0.253$, $t = 4.2$, $p < 0.001$). The results suggested that exposure to self-presentation content increases, self-esteem also increases slightly. This finding supported the first research hypothesis that exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook had a positive influence on self-esteem.

Table 4.13: Results of Regression Analysis on Exposure to Others' Self-Presentation on Facebook as Predictor of Self-Esteem and Depression

Dependent Variable	B	S.E.	Beta	t	Sig.
Self-esteem*	0.145	0.035	0.253	4.192	<.001
Depression**	0.011	0.043	0.015	0.245	0.806

*$R^2 = .064$, $df = 1$ ($p < .001$)

**$R^2 = .000$, $df = 1$ ($p > .05$)

4.3.2 <u>Hypothesis 2 (HP#2)</u>

According to the HP#2: Exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly influences depression experienced by Burmese youth residing in Thailand, the Linear Regression Analysis was conducted to test this research hypothesis. The result revealed that respondents' exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook did not significantly predict their depression ($F = 0.060$, $p > 0.05$). The results suggested exposure to self-presentation can predict only 6.4% of their self-esteem ($R^2 = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.015$, $t = 0.245$, $p > 0.05$). The results suggested that exposure to self-presentation content increases, depression does not increase. This finding does not support the second research hypothesis that exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook significantly influences depression.

4.3.3 <u>Hypothesis 3 (HP#3)</u>

According to the HP#3, it is hypothesized that gender moderates the impact of Burmese youth's exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on their self-esteem. The Independent Sample T-Test was conducted to test this research hypothesis such that male respondents' mean of self-esteem is compared with female respondents' one. Analysis result yields that there is no significant difference in self-esteem between genders ($t = -.615$, $p > .05$). The finding does not support the third research hypothesis that gender moderates the impact of Burmese youth's exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on their self-esteem.

Table 4.14: Results of the Independent Sample T-Test Comparing Mean of

Respondents' Self-Esteem between Males and Females

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	p
Male	116	2.63	0.50		
				-.615	0.54
Female	113	2.67	0.39		

4.3.4 Hypothesis 4 (HP#4)

According to HP#4: it is hypothesized that gender moderates the impact of Burmese youth's exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on their depression. The Independent Sample T-Test was conducted to test this research hypothesis such that male respondents' mean of depression is compared with female respondents' one. Analysis result yields that the difference in depression levels between genders is not significant (t = -.936, p > .05). The finding does not support the fourth research hypothesis that gender moderates the impact of Burmese youth's exposure to other Facebook users' self-presentation on their depression.

Table 4.15: Results of Independent Sample T-Test Comparing Mean of Respondents' Depression between Males and Females

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	p
Male	116	1.22	0.58		
				-.936	0.35
Female	113	1.28	0.51		

4.3 <u>Summary of Findings</u>

Overall, this chapter has presented the results of statistical analyses conducted to describe respondents' characteristics, mean and standard deviation of the examined variables, and to test the proposed four research hypotheses related to the influence of Burmese youths' exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook on their self-esteem and depression. The findings highlight a significant causal relationship between exposure to others' self-presentation and self-esteem, but insignificant causal relationship with depression, with no moderation effects by gender. This sets the stage for a more detailed discussion of the implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research and practice, which are addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter provided an overview and analysis of the study's findings, discussing their implications in relation to relevant theories, previous research, and the researcher's initial expectations. It also addresses the study's limitations and offers suggestions for practical applications and directions for future research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study surveyed a total of 277 participants, with 259 valid responses (aged 18–28) used for data analysis. The demographic profile of the respondents revealed a nearly equal gender distribution: 44.8% (n =116) were male, 43.7% (n =113) were female, 7.3% (n =19) identified as non-binary, and 4.2% (n =11) chose "Prefer not to say." In terms of age, the largest group of respondents were 25 years old (16.2%, n = 42), followed by 23-year-olds (13.5%, n = 35). The youngest group (18 years old) accounted for only 2.3% (n = 6), while the oldest group (28 years old) made up 4.2% (n = 11) Regarding residence duration in Thailand, 54.1% (n =140) had lived there for less than a year, followed by 40.9% (n =106) residing for 1–2 years, 4.6% (n =12) for 3–4 years, and 0.4% (n =1) for more than four years.

Respondents' Facebook usage patterns highlighted that a majority (6.8%, n = 147) used the platform multiple times daily, while others used it a few times a week (22.4%, n = 58), once a day (16.6%, n =43), or once a week (4.2%, n =11). Most respondents spent less than two hours per day on Facebook, with 29.3% (n = 76)

spending 16–59 minutes and 29.3% (n = 76) spending 1–2 hours. Smaller proportions

spent less than 15 minutes daily (12.4%, n = 32), 3–4 hours daily (19.3%, n = 50), or

more than 4 hours daily (9.7%, n = 25). Engagement with Facebook content revealed

a preference for visual and multimedia content, particularly videos (233 responses)

and photos (194 responses). Respondents also engaged with live streams (140

responses), influencer content (108 responses), status updates (97 responses), news

articles (69 responses), and group discussions (27 responses), with textual content

receiving less engagement overall.

The mean scores and standard deviations of the examined variables provided

additional insights. The mean score for exposure to self-presentation content on

Facebook (M = 2.57, SD = 0.77) indicated a moderate level of engagement with self-

presentation activities. Respondents reported a moderate level of self-esteem (M =

2.65, SD = 0.44), suggesting a generally positive sense of self-worth. Depression

levels were relatively low (M = 1.25, SD = 0.53), indicating mild depressive

symptoms for most respondents. The hypothesis testing yielded the following results:

HP#1: Exposure to self-presentation content significantly influences self-esteem. The

results suggested exposure to self-presentation can predict only 6.4% of their self-

esteem (R^2 =0.064, β =0.253, t=4.2, p < 0.001). The results suggested that exposure to

self-presentation content increases, self-esteem also increases slightly. HP#2:

Exposure to self-presentation content does not significantly influence depression. The

Linear Regression analysis did not support this hypothesis. The result revealed that

respondents' exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook did not significantly

predict their depression (F =0.060, p > 0.05). The results suggested exposure to self-

presentation can predict only 6.4% of their self-esteem (R^2 =0.000, β =0.015, t=

0.245, $p > 0.05$). The results suggested that exposure to self-presentation content increases, depression does not increase. HP#3: Gender moderates the impact of exposure on self-esteem. The Independent Samples T-Test comparing male and female self-esteem scores did not yield a significant difference ($t = -.615$, $p > .05$), failing to support this hypothesis. Gender does not moderate the relationship between exposure to self-presentation and self-esteem. HP#4: Gender moderates the impact of exposure on depression. The Independent Samples T-Test comparing male and female depression scores also showed no significant difference ($t = -.936$, $p > .05$) failing to support this hypothesis. Gender does not moderate the relationship between exposure to self-presentation and depression.

In summary, the findings suggested that exposure to self-presentation content positively influences self-esteem but does not impact depression. Additionally, gender does not moderate the relationship between exposure and either self-esteem or depression. These results provided valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping psychological outcomes among Burmese youth residing in Thailand.

5.2 Discussions of Findings

The results of this study provided important insights into how exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook influences the psychological well-being of Burmese youth residing in Thailand. Specifically, the findings demonstrated that while exposure to self-presentation content significantly influences self-esteem, it does not have a significant effect on depression. Exposure to others' achievements,

social activities, and personal updates on social media appeared to impact self-esteem by encouraging social comparisons or influencing individuals' perceptions of their own self-worth. This aligned with existing literature, which suggested that social media platforms often serve as spaces for users to compare themselves to others, potentially enhancing or diminishing self-perception (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011; Appel, Marker & Gnambs, 2020). In this study, higher exposure to self-presentation content was associated with higher self-esteem, indicating that Burmese youth may perceive others' content positively, leading to an improved self-image.

However, the study found no significant relationship between exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook and depression. These results suggested that while social media exposure can influence certain psychological outcomes, its effects were not universally negative or applicable across all dimensions of mental health. This suggested that exposure to self-presentation content alone was not sufficient to trigger depressive symptoms such as sadness, hopelessness, or worthlessness. Instead, other contributing factors, such as stress, social support, or offline experiences, may play a more prominent role in influencing depression. The absence of a significant relationship indicated that depression is likely a more complex psychological outcome that cannot be fully explained by social media exposure alone. Additionally, the study revealed that gender does not moderate the relationship between exposure to self-presentation content (IV) and the dependent variables - self-esteem and depression. This implied that the influence of exposure on self-esteem does not differ between male and female respondents.

5.2.1   Discussions Based on Relevant Theories

The results align with the theoretical framework of the Social Comparison Theory, which posited that individuals evaluate their own worth by comparing themselves to others (Festinger, 1954). On social media, where users are constantly exposed to curated, often idealized versions of others' lives, such comparisons can have profound impacts on self-perception. The significant relationship between exposure to self-presentation content and self-esteem supported the notion that social media platforms like Facebook provide a fertile ground for these comparisons. When individuals are exposed to others' self-presentation content such as achievements, personal milestones, or visual portrayals, they are likely to engage in upward or downward social comparisons (Vogel, Rose, Eckles & Roberts, 2014; Corcoran, Crusius, & Mussweiler, 2011). In upward comparisons, individuals compare themselves to others they perceive as better off, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy or diminished self-worth (Vogel et al., 2014). For example, seeing peers post about their successes, vacations, or perfect relationships may create a sense of personal failure or inferiority, especially if individuals feel they cannot measure up. On the other hand, downward comparisons, where individuals compare themselves to those they perceive as worse off, can bolster self-esteem by allowing individuals to feel better about their own circumstances (Gibbons & Gerrard, 1991). These dynamics help explain the significant positive relationship found between exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook and their self-esteem in this study - Burmese youth may engage in downward comparisons that enhance their self-image, particularly in the context of seeing less idealized representations of others or finding aspects of their own lives that they feel are superior to what is portrayed online.

The lack of a significant effect of exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook on depression suggested that the Social Comparison Theory alone does not fully explain the psychological outcomes associated with social media use. While self-esteem may be more directly influenced by social comparisons, depression may be driven by more complex psychological and environmental factors, such as offline experiences, pre-existing mental health conditions, or long-term stressors (Twenge & Campbell, 2018). Research suggested that while upward social comparisons can negatively affect self-esteem, they may not always lead to depression unless compounded by other issues, such as social isolation or a lack of social support (Nesi & Prinstein, 2015). Thus, the Social Comparison Theory may need to be integrated with other frameworks, such as cognitive-behavioral theories or stress-buffering models, to fully capture how social media exposure affects mental health.

Moreover, the findings highlighted the need for future research to explore other potential moderators or mediators, such as personality traits (e.g., self-concept clarity, resilience, or neuroticism) that could intensify or mitigate the effects of social media exposure (de Vries & Kühne, 2015; Kross, Verduyn, Demiralp, Park, Lee, Lin, Shablack, Jonides & Ybarra, 2013). For example, individuals with high levels of self-concept clarity, a clear understanding of who they are, may be less affected by social comparisons, as they are less likely to base their self-worth on others' achievements (Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavallee & Lehman, 1996). Conversely, those with high neuroticism may be more prone to emotional distress from social comparisons, which could exacerbate the negative effects of social media exposure on mental health (Stieger, Burger, Bohn & Voracek, 2013).

In summary, the findings supported the relevance of the Social Comparison Theory in explaining the impact of exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook on self-esteem, but they also pointed to the need for a more nuanced understanding of how social media influences mental health. Future research should consider additional psychological and cultural factors that may moderate these relationships and explore how different populations experience social media in varying sociocultural contexts.

5.2.2 Discussions Based on Previous Studies

The findings corroborated previous studies that have found social media exposure to significantly impact self-esteem but not necessarily influenced depression. For example, research by Vogel et al. (2014) indicated that exposure to idealized portrayals on social media led to lower self-esteem but did not directly predict depression. Similarly, Tandoc, Ferrucci, & Duffy (2015) suggested that while social media use can evoke feelings of envy, it does not always translate into depressive symptoms unless other predisposing factors are present. This study, therefore, adds to the body of literature by confirming that social media exposure is more likely to affect self-perception (self-esteem) rather than emotional states (depression) in the Burmese youth population in Thailand. The differentiation between self-esteem and depression as psychological outcomes of social media exposure has been highlighted in various studies, emphasizing that self-esteem is more susceptible to social comparison processes than depression. Festinger's (1954) Social Comparison Theory may provide a framework for understanding this outcome.

As individuals compare themselves to others on social media, they are often exposed to curated content that showcases idealized versions of others' lives. This exposure can lead to unfavorable self-evaluations, which impact self-esteem more directly, as individuals internalize these comparisons as reflections of their own inadequacies. However, depression often requires a combination of factors beyond self-perception, such as genetic predispositions, long-term stressors, and individual psychological resilience. This aligned with Lin, Sidani, Shensa, Radovic, Miller, Colditz, Hoffman, Files & Primack (2016), who noted that while social media could contribute to depressive feelings, it is often only a minor factor within a complex array of influences.

Furthermore, the findings also reflected cultural and contextual factors that shape the social media experience for Burmese youth in Thailand. Unlike Western populations frequently examined in social media studies, Burmese youth may experience unique social pressures and community dynamics that influence how they respond to self-presentation content. For example, the collectivistic cultural orientation prevalent in Burmese and many other Southeast Asian societies emphasizes community, family, and social harmony, which may moderate the effects of social media comparison on depression. Studies such as those by Aldkheel and Zhou (2024) suggested that individuals in collectivistic societies may place less emphasis on deriving personal achievement and self-worth from social media validation. This cultural tendency could serve as a buffer against depressive symptoms, as individuals may be less affected by the pressures of online comparison and approval.

These findings underscored the varying impact of social media on mental health across different cultural contexts, highlighting how individualistic versus collectivistic orientations can shape the psychological effects of social media engagement. Therefore, this study not only confirmed findings from prior research but also highlighted the importance of considering cultural context in understanding the psychological impacts of social media exposure.

5.2.3   Discussions Based on Researcher's Expectations

The researcher initially hypothesized that gender would moderate the relationship between exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook and both self-esteem and depression, given the potential for differing social media use patterns and emotional responses across genders. Previous studies have suggested that men and women typically engaged with and respond to social media differently. For instance, Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten (2006) found that females tend to be more sensitive to social comparisons and negative feedback on social media, which can lead to lower self-esteem and higher rates of depressive symptoms. Similarly, Nesi and Prinstein (2015) highlighted that adolescent girls were more likely to experience emotional distress from social media interactions compared to boys, due to greater engagement in social comparisons and rumination.

However, the findings of this study did not support the researcher's initial hypothesis regarding the moderating role of gender on the relationship between exposure to self-presentation content (EXPC) on social media and self-esteem

(Hypothesis 3) or depression (Hypothesis 4). The results from the Independent Samples T-Test indicated that there is no significant difference in the self-esteem or depression scores between males and females. This suggested that gender does not moderate the effect of exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook on self-esteem or depression among Burmese youth residing in Thailand. Contrary to expectations, the influence of exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook on self-esteem does not differ significantly between males and females. This result challenged previous research suggesting that females may be more susceptible to social comparison effects on social media (Valkenburg et al., 2006). One potential explanation for the lack of a moderating effect could be that Burmese youth, regardless of gender, experience social media content in a similar way, possibly due to shared cultural or contextual factors that minimize gender-based differences in self-perception and emotional response. Furthermore, the lack of gender moderation for depression suggested that the psychological impact of social media exposure may be governed by broader factors beyond gender. Depression may be more strongly influenced by individual psychological traits, cultural values, or environmental stressors that affect both males and females equally, rather than by gender-based differences in social comparison behaviors on social media.

In summary, the study's findings indicated that gender does not moderate the relationship between exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook and self-esteem, or depression. These results underscored the importance of considering other potential moderators such as cultural or personality factors in future research on social media and psychological well-being. The results also suggested that interventions aimed at mitigating the negative effects of social media on mental health

among Burmese youth may not need to be gender-specific, as both males and females appear similarly impacted by exposure to others' self-presentation on Facebook.

5.3 Limitations

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limited the ability to establish causality between exposure to others' self-presentation content on Facebook and psychological outcomes. Future studies could employ longitudinal or experimental designs to assess causal relationships more deeply.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias or inaccurate reporting. Implementing objective measures, such as direct observation of social media usage, could mitigate this limitation.

Third, due to limited budget, samples were selected based on convenience sampling. As the sample units had no equal chance of being selected, it was possible that some of the selected samples are somehow different from the Burmese youth in general.

Additionally, the sample was limited to Burmese youth aged 18 to 28 who are residing in Thailand, which may not fully capture the experiences of other migrant populations or those in different sociocultural settings. As such, the generalizability of the findings is constrained.

5.4 <u>Recommendation for Future Research</u>

Future research should explore other potential moderators or mediators, such as social support, cultural background, individual psychological characteristics, coping mechanisms, or personality traits, to better understand the dynamics between exposure to others' self-presentation content on social media and psychological well-being. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into how sustained exposure to self-presentation content affects mental health over time.

In terms of research approach, qualitative research could delve into the subjective experiences of Burmese youth with social media, uncovering cultural or contextual nuances that quantitative approaches may overlook. Future studies might benefit from qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, to gain deeper insights into the subjective experiences of Burmese youth on social media. These methods would help to capture the complexities of how individuals interpret and respond to self-presentation content, offering a more detailed understanding of the emotional and psychological reactions involved. Qualitative data could also inform the development of culturally sensitive interventions aimed at improving mental health outcomes for social media users in diverse contexts.

In terms of sample selection, expanding the sample to include other ethnic groups or migrant populations would enhance the generalizability of the findings and offer a broader perspective on the role of social media in youth mental health.

Another important direction for further investigation is exploring the potential link between frequent exposure to self-presentation content on Facebook and its

impact on mental health, including the occurrence of suicide cases among Burmese youth in Thailand, whether they are there for studies or work. Understanding this correlation can inform preventive measures and mental health support initiatives.

Future research could benefit from adopting specific timeframes, such as focusing on the use of Facebook and its potential association with youth depression in particular years, like 2022 or 2023. This temporal specificity can offer valuable insights into evolving trends and help discern patterns over time. These recommendations are intended to provide guidance for future research endeavors, ensuring a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between Facebook, self-presentation, and youth well-being in Myanmar.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Applications

Based on findings and discussions of this study, recommendations for further applications are provided below.

5.5.1   Application for Governmental Offices/Policy Makers

Policymakers should also prioritize the integration of mental health education into school curricula to ensure that youth, particularly those in migrant communities, are equipped with the skills to navigate the emotional challenges posed by social media. This could include teaching coping mechanisms for managing anxiety, depression, and body image issues often exacerbated by online comparison. Moreover, governments should consider offering subsidized or accessible counseling services, either in person or virtually, to support migrant youth who may not have easy access to mental health care due to financial or geographic barriers. Encouraging

partnerships between schools, local governments, and mental health professionals could help create safe spaces where young people can openly discuss their mental health struggles related to social media exposure. Creating national campaigns aimed at destigmatizing mental health care, especially in migrant communities, can also play a crucial role in ensuring that youth seek help when needed. Additionally, governments could introduce initiatives that promote a healthier online environment by collaborating with social media platforms and tech companies to implement more stringent regulations around harmful content, such as cyberbullying, body shaming, and inappropriate comparisons. Social media companies could be encouraged or even required to incorporate tools that allow users to report harmful content, receive guidance on mental health resources, or access real-time support when distressing material is encountered. Providing incentives for companies that adopt ethical practices and demonstrate a commitment to promoting mental well-being would be an important step toward protecting young users from the negative psychological impacts of excessive or unhealthy social media exposure.

5.5.2 <u>Application for Communication Practitioners</u>

Communication practitioners also have an opportunity to collaborate with mental health professionals and digital influencers to promote narratives that focus on vulnerability, resilience, and authenticity. By creating campaigns that normalize struggles with self-esteem, mental health, and body image, they can help dismantle unrealistic portrayals of life and beauty on social media. Influencers and content creators who prioritize transparency and mental wellness can serve as role models,

demonstrating that real-life experiences, including challenges and imperfections, are what truly resonate with audiences. Practitioners can also work towards creating more interactive, youth-driven platforms that encourage positive engagement, self-expression, and supportive dialogue within communities. This could involve establishing online spaces where users can share their mental health journeys, receive peer support, and collectively challenge harmful beauty standards and social comparisons. Furthermore, communication practitioners should advocate for the development of tailored resources for marginalized groups, such as migrant and LGBTQ+ youth, who may face additional barriers in accessing support or may be more susceptible to negative self-perception through social media. These resources should take into account cultural, linguistic, and social factors that influence how different groups use and experience social media. By crafting culturally relevant, inclusive, and emotionally supportive messages, communication practitioners can play a pivotal role in guiding young people toward healthier online behaviors and attitudes, ultimately enhancing their overall mental well-being.

5.5.3   Recommendations for the Public

Given the study's findings, it is essential for various stakeholders, particularly youth and parents or caregivers, to adopt healthy practices around social media use. For youth, it is important to cultivate self-awareness and validate one's own emotions without relying heavily on social media for self-worth. Social media can be a valuable tool for entertainment and education, but it should not be a primary source for personal validation. Young people should remember that online content often

represents idealized versions of life and should not be taken as direct reflections of reality. Learning to separate one's self-esteem from social media interactions can help maintain a balanced perspective and foster emotional resilience. For parents and caregivers, the focus should be on building a supportive and understanding environment at home. Parents are encouraged to check in on their children's emotional well-being regularly and approach mistakes with patience rather than criticism. Creating a warm, non-judgmental space allows children to feel valued and understood within their family, reducing the likelihood that they will seek validation and affection from strangers online. By fostering open communication and encouraging healthy self-expression, parents can play a significant role in helping their children build self-confidence independent of social media influences.

In summary, both youth and parents can work together to promote healthier interactions with social media. By recognizing the platform's limitations in fulfilling emotional needs and focusing on real-world connections, they can contribute to a more grounded and positive experience with digital media.

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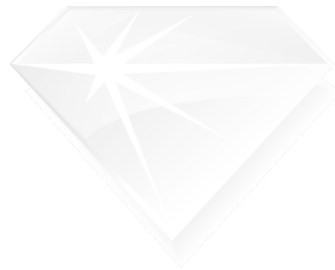
APPENDIX

<u>Questionnaire</u>

My name is Shwe Sin Ye Htut, and I am a graduate student at Bangkok University. I am conducting this survey research as part of the requirement by the Master of Communication Arts in Global Communication. This survey aims to understand how Burmese youths in Thailand use Facebook and how it might affect their mental well-being.

This questionnaire consists of five sections and a total of 31 questions. It will take about 10 minutes of your time to complete. Your personal data collected will be kept anonymous and used solely for educational purposes. Your insights and experiences are invaluable and will significantly contribute to my academic success. Please answer all questions truthfully.

<u>Instruction</u>: Select the only one answer or answer(s) that best represent you or your situations.

<u>Section A: Demographic Information</u>

1. How old are you?

   o   Under 18

   o   18-21

   o   22-25

   o   26 and above

2. What is your gender?

   o   Male

   o   Female

   o   Non-binary

o   Prefer not to say

3. What is your monthly income?

o   Less than 10,000 THB

o   10,001 – 20,000 THB

o   20,001 – 30,000 THB

o   30,001 – 40,000 THB

o   40,001 – 50,000 THB

o   More than 50,000 THB

4. Duration of residence in Thailand:

o   Less than 1 year

o   1-2 years

o   3-4 years

o   More than 4 years

5. Which province do you currently live in?

o   Bangkok

o   Chiang Mai

o   Phuket

o   Phetchaburi

o   Sukhothai

o   Other (please specify)

Section B: Facebook Usage

6. On average, how often do you use Facebook?

o   Multiple times a day

o   Once a day

o   A few times a week

o   Once a week

o   Less than once a week

7. On average, how long do you spend on Facebook?

o   Less than 15 minutes per day

o   16 – 59 minutes per day

o   1 - 2 hours per day

o   3 - 4 hours per day

o   More than 4 hours per day

8. What types of content are you exposed to on Facebook on a regular basis? (Select

all that apply)

o   Photos

o   Videos

o   Live streams

o   Influencer content

o   Status updates

o   News articles

o   Group discussions

o   Other (please specify)

Section C: Exposure to Others' Self-Presentation on Facebook

Please indicate how frequently you are exposed to others' self-presentation on

Facebook in the **PAST WEEK** (7 days). For each statement, please respond based on

the following scale: Never (0 time per week), Hardly (1 - 2 times per week),

Sometimes (3 - 4 times per week), Often (5 - 6 times per week), Always (7 times or

more per week).

Statements	Level of Exposure Per Week				
	Never (0 time)	Hardly (1 - 2 times)	Sometimes (3 – 4 times)	Often (5 - 6 times)	Always (7 times or more)
1. The persons share posts or stories on Facebook about their exciting life (e.g., go to a party with friends, check in in cool places).					
2. The persons share posts or stories on Facebook about their sucessful life.					
3. The persons look beautiful or handsome.					
4. The persons show that they are having a lot of fun.					
5. The persons appear to have many friends.					
6. The persons describe how great a friendship is (e.g., showing that they have much fun together).					
7. The persons are doing nice things (e.g., going on a trip with family).					
8. The persons show a nice or trendy clothing style.					

9. The persons' body looks almost perfect (e.g., slim or muscled).					
10. The persons share posts or stories on Facebook showcasing a nice holiday they took.					
11. The persons show their romantic relationship looks perfect (e.g., that it is clear they are in love and do happy things together).					

Section D: Self-esteem

12. On a scale from 1 to 5, how would you respect yourself as an individual?

- o Very low (1)

- o Low (2)

- o Moderate (3)

- o High (4)

- o Very high (5)

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following statements

regarding your **self-esteem**. Select the only one answer based on the 4-point scale: 1 =

Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly agree.

Statements	Level of Agreement / Disagreement			
	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly agree 4
13. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				

14. At times, I think I am no good at all.				
15. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
16. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
17. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
18. I certainly feel useless at times.				
19. I feel that I am a person of self-worth at least on an equal plane with others.				
20. I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
21. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
22. I take a positive attitude towards myself.				

Section E: Depression

Based on the following situations, choose only one number beside each set of the

statements that best describes the way you have been feeling in the **past two weeks**,

including today.

Statements	Not at all 0	Once in Several days 1	More than half the days 2	Nearly everyday 3
23. Little interest or pleasure in doing things				
24. Feeling down, depressed or hopeless				

25. Troubling falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much				
26. Feeling tired or having little energy.				
27. Poor appetite or overeating.				
28. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down.				
29. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television.				
30. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual.				
31. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way.				

** Thank you **

BIODATA

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