

Research Article

## **The Social Grooming Behaviours among Users of Social Media**

**Zeena Ismael Ibraheem & Prof. Dr. Ahmed Latif Jassim**

zena.Isamel1204e@coart.uobaghdad.edu.iq, ahmed.l@gmail.coart.unobagdad.edu.iq

University of Baghdad/College of Arts/Department of Psychology

### **Abstract**

The social grooming behaviors can be defined as the behavior of constructing social relationships by using different social grooming methods including primitive methods (face –to-face communication) and modern methods (email and social networking sites). Thus , the social grooming behaviors comprise behaviors of surfing the web, and social interaction for the purpose of maintaining social relationships. Also, they include web surfing, visiting websites and personal files check-up of users together with clicking on likes, and leaving out messages or comments in other personal files. The current study aims at identifying the social grooming behaviors among the social media users and the statistically significant differences in the social grooming behaviours according to gender (male-female), field of specialization (scientific-literary). Results show that the sample of the study is described of having social grooming behavior towards others with high level. There are statistically significant differences in the social grooming according to the variable of gender in favor of female and there are statistical significant differences in the social grooming according to the variable of field of specialization in favor of scientific field.

**Keywords:** gender, social grooming behaviors, social media, variable ,youngmen

### **Introduction**

The social grooming behaviors have sometimes been connected as an attempt to expand in social media, check- up and communicate with social media users. So, Youngmen use them to create social connections and relationships and search for information about other people. This process which maintains the social relationships and the quest for social information is somehow a form of social grooming (Kim& Chock, 2015, p.331).

Youngmen use social media increasingly and this led to create radical changes in the process of communication .Thus, instead of face to face communication , there appeared new forms of developed methods of communication these methods include : case updating, likes registration , comments , emoji use to respond to comments. These methods became prevailing behaviors must not be ignored among young people. Accordingly, the problem of the current research paper can be summed up in the following question:

What is the extent of behaviors practiced by young adults of both gender (male-female) to groom others via social media.

The social grooming plays a vital role in constructing social relationships and maintaining them primarily, social grooming is the act of cleaning, maintaining social connection with partners (Van de Waal et al., 2013, p. 1). So, social grooming has a useful impact on building mutual relationships (Takano et al., 2016, p.1). Although, the social groom primarily spread within primitives. Yet, the mutual social grooming among human beings has not received high priority or given sufficient attention in all academic circles (Nelson, 2007, p. 5).

The social grooming method is important and vital in accumulating and connecting the social capital and the method which interacts socially is called the social grooming method (Ellison et al., 2014, p.858). The social grooming can be described in terms of social participation behaviors which includes surfing, sites visiting, check-up personal files of users, ticking on "likes" and leaving out messages and comments in personal files of others (Kim & Chock, 2015, p.333). Moreover, the social grooming is distinguished by behaviors of joining social activities associated with checking personal files of friends, leaving out message and comments on them (Kim & Chock, 2015, p.331). Furthermore, Utz & Beukeboom (2011, p.515) defines social grooming behaviors as "behavior of surfing and interacting for the purpose of maintaining on social relationships" and Bryer & Zavatarro (2011) defines social media as "techniques facilitate social interaction and they make cooperation possible as well as enable circulating among stakeholders (Bryer & Zavatarro, 2011, p.327).

The current paper aims at identifying the social grooming behaviors among university students and statistical significant differences in social grooming behaviors among university students according to the variable of gender (male-female) and field of specialization (scientific, literary).

### **Literature Review**

#### **Social Comparison Theory**

This theory stressed the influence of communication and social interaction on evaluating viewpoints and orientations of individuals since some of competitive behaviors and social impact process stem from the fact that they aim to evaluate the individual self with others (Al-Daghastani, 2017, p.145). The social comparison is a spontaneous process as long as individuals exposed information about others, they will make comparison a social comparison (Guo & Wang, 2018, p. 628).

Interaction and participation, via social media, is regarded as a further method of participation where people get involved in social comparison due to the fact that they seek to be evaluated and approved by others via social interaction through internet which influenced their viewpoints (Norton, 2017, p.17). In the same token, Kim & Chock (2015) conducted a study that aims to survey the relationship between behaviors of involvement in social grooming on the face book and getting much more attention of body image by employing Festinger's theory in social comparison (1954), along with modern studies that investigate correlations between using social media sites and getting attention by body image. So, this study has expected that involvement in behavior of social grooming (e.g. visiting websites, personal files check-up, ticking on likes buttons, leaving out comments or messages, etc.) will be associated with the increase of attention of body image and thus these types will create big opportunities for individuals to watch images and information about others.

The current study hypothesized that people tend to publish attractive pictures or photos for themselves in their personal files via social media and watching these ideal photos will facilitate in getting attention of body image. Accordingly, the results of this study support this hypothesis. They indicate that the high level of behaviors of social grooming on the face book are connected positively with the motive of slimness and appearance comparison (Kim & Chock, 2015, p. 336).

## **Signal Theory**

The signal theory focuses on hidden and implicit meanings behind the behaviors and the invested costs in signals and behaviors. These costs and benefits have been employed in signal theory to analyze the social grooming behavior of individuals in monkeys. Monkeys groom each other by means of picking insects out of other monkey's furs. However, this activity lasts a long time (high cost) because every monkey can pick bug out of another monkey's fur at one time. Yet, it is probable that those involved monkeys help each other and they do not fight each other. Accordingly, mutual grooming creates relationship by using signal theory framework.

So, Donath (2008) conducted an experiment by analyzing how people groom each other socially in the viewpoint of relationship investment, since the cost of time is a signal or resources which people want to abide by this relationship (Donath, 2008, p.238).

The vital approach of maintaining social relationship network and social grooming which consists of weak relationship has done by case updating or broadcast individual's opinions (Manago et al, 2012, p.2). In order to groom social network users, users form new social grooming styles that signal their personal method in introducing themselves and maintaining their relationship with others (Lin, 2018, p.92).

Jih-Hsuan Tammy Lin (2019) conducted a study about strategic social grooming styles of social upbringings on the face book and social capitol and luxury. This study surveys the common types of social interactions on social media and suggests a framework of social grooming has been developed by signal theory. Thus, this study has tested many of behaviors at the same time to delimit the style of social grooming and shows that the style of social grooming is associated closely with the social capitols and luxury (Lin, 2019, p.90).

## **Social Media**

### **Uses and Gratification Theory**

It discusses the effects of the media on people. It explains how people use the media for their own need and get satisfied when their needs are fulfilled. This theory was developed by Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz. This theory focused on sources of motivation which people use and what people feel or satisfy of their usage. Thus, the problem of satisfaction can be classified into Content satisfaction and process satisfaction. Yakin & Tinmaz (2015, p.69) state that this theory can be used in the key question about satisfaction of using social media.

## **Method**

### **The Sample**

The simple random sample has been chosen in this study. This sample is described of being equal distribution where (200) students have been selected on amount of (100) students (for humanitarian colleges) and (100) students (for scientific colleges), namely, on amount of (50) students in each college (25 males and 25 females).

### **Tool (Instrument)**

To achieve the aims of the current study, there should be a tool to measure the variables of the research paper (social grooming behavior) and due to the fact that there is no adequate ready-made

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scales for social grooming. The researcher conducted new prepared scale of social grooming consisting of items which are collected from previous review of literature. So, (35) items has been prepared and each item for each item there are four options including (never, sometimes, often and always). Each option has been given weight value including (1,2,3,4) out of score and they show the values of options of social grooming scale. It is concluded out of the distribution of weight that the increase of measured score on the scale means social grooming behavior have high value. The researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient to extract the coefficient among each item at the scale. The results show that the items have been significant and they range from (0.10 – 0.68). T- tabulated value was high which amounts to (0.098) at level of (0.05) and freedom degree of about (398) the study sample was (400). The face validity has been fulfilled by means of scale display on a number of jury members. Thus, construct validity has been reached to via the indicator of correlation of item score by the score of total score. Pearson correlation coefficient has been used among individual scores in the first test and the scores of the second test. Accordingly, the correlation of reliability has come to (0.79). After applying Alpha Croanbach on the values of sample score of social grooming, the value of reliability of Alpha Croanbach has come to (0.89) of social grooming.

### The Results

Social grooming behavior scale has been applied on the population sample amounting to (200) male and female students. The results show that the average of their scores on the scale has come to (92) with standard deviation of about (15.36). When weighing the hypothetical mean amounting to (85) by using T-test for one sample .It is found that there is a statistical significant difference in favor of the arithmetic mean where the calculated T-value is higher than tabulated T value amounting to (1.96) with freedom degree of about (199) with significance level of (0.05). Table (1) below illustrates this:

Table (1) The T-test of difference between sample mean and hypothetical mean of social grooming behaviors scale

Sample size	Arithmetic mean	Standard Deviation	T- calculate d Value	T- tabulate d Value	Freedom degree	Level of significanc e
200	92	15.36	6.45	1.96	199	Significant

Results of table (1) points out that the sample of the study is described by having social grooming behavior towards others with high level. Thus , two way Anova analysis have been used to identify the statistical significant differences in social grooming behavior according to the two variables of gender and field of specialization. Table (2) below illustrates this:

Source of variance	Summation of squares	Degree freedom	Mean of Square	F- value	Significance
Gender	3536.405	1	3536.405	17.689	Significance
Field of specialization	3689.405	3689.405	1	18.455	Significance
Specialized	541.205	1	541.205	2.707	Non

Gender					significance 0.05
Error	39183.98	196	199.918	-	-
Total	1739935	200	-	-	-

Results of table (2) show that there is a statistical significant difference in social grooming according to the variable of gender in favour of female students. Thus, calculated F-value has come to (17.689 )and which is higher than tabulated F-value which has come to (3.84) with a significance level of about (1.196 ) and there is a statistical significance difference according to the variable of field of specialization in favour of science stream since the calculated F-Value has come to (18.455) which is higher than tabulated F-value that comes to (3.84) with significance level of about (0.05) with freedom degree of about (1-196) .The results show that there is no significant interaction between the two variables (gender and the field of specialization), since the calculated F-value has come to(2.707) which is lower than tabulated F- value amounting to (3.84) with significant level of about (0.05) and freedom degree of about (1-196) .

### **Discussion**

The current study investigated whether Baghdad University students have been described of having social grooming behaviors towards others or not. The Results show that the sample of the study have been described of possessing social grooming behavior towards others with high level. And as long as the social comparison is a spontaneous process as individuals have been expressed to others' information they will carry out social comparison (Guo & Wang, 2018, p.628).So, the social media may increase of involvement in the social comparison process as a result of network connection and expose of personal files of users (Kim, 2018, p.3) .Thus, Youngman used to use social media to form and construct social connections as well as they search for information about others. Accordingly, these behaviors become prevailing among Youngman (Kim &Chock, 2015, p.333).Similarly, Lin's study (2019) and Kim and Chock ' study (2015) have agreed upon this fact.

The results also show that there is statistical significant difference in social grooming according to the variable of gender in favour of females along with social comparison theory and previous studies including Vogel et al.'s study (2014). It is hypothesized that social media are used to maintain the personal file and social grooming with a great tendency to compare the individual appearance with his peers on the social media (Kim, 2018, p.9).Some studies point out that males and females use social media differently such as Ellison et al.'s study (2014) which states that females are more object to use face book to maintain relationship or develop communication inside society (Ellison et al., 2014, p.862).Therefore, females are more object to involve in social grooming (Kim & Chock ,2015,p.334). This result agreed upon with the study of Ellison et al (2014) and the study of Kim (2018).The results also show that there is a statistical significant difference in social grooming according to the variable of field of specification in favor of scientific stream. So, in the perspective of social comparison theory, university students have enjoyed with high level of social grooming (Guo&Wang,2018,p.628).As a matter of fact , the relative studying of university graduates among their peers is deemed to be as indicator to their professional and vocational aspirations. The student who gets high scores tends to have ambition to get high level of profession more than that of qualified student in more competitive college .So, the social environment imposes influential comparison over the individual as many studies on the self-concept and self of satisfaction indicate these personal

results .Accordingly , this is applicable to the difference between scientific and humanitarian specialization since social environment provides comparisons that influence the individual whether he/she chooses them or not .These studies defy Festinger's implied image (1954) of the social environment as non - active background for the individual's comparisons (Wood,1989,p.232-233).

### Conclusion

Social grooming behaviors are considered double-edged weapon. On the one hand , the positive side can be useful in boosting social relationships and increasing social connection and participation .On the other hand , these behaviors may be employed for the purpose of exploitation, and blackmail and extortion especially on the social media .As for social grooming behaviors are in dire need to be developed and maturation of measurement .Many international studies have pointed out that they have not so far being capable of measuring these behaviors thoroughly. This resulted from the novelty of the subject and multiplicity of these behaviors on the social media.

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