The background of the slide features a close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a gold-colored smartphone resting on a wooden surface. To the left of the phone, a portion of a magazine is visible, showing a colorful, beaded heart-shaped object. The overall lighting is warm and soft, creating a focused and intimate atmosphere.

# Anxiety & Young Instagram Users

Aimen Awan

# Agenda

- Why Instagram
- Research Objectives
- Research Phases
- Results & Findings
- Recommendations
- Next Steps

# Why Instagram



When Facebook bought Instagram, it had only 30 million users. Now Instagram has 1 billion monthly active users.



Over 40 billion photos have been shared on the platform. Instagram usage is doubled between June 2016 and 2018.



The biggest demographic group are males between 18-24 and 60.4% of all users are aged between 18 & 24.



Instagram is the most popular social media platform among young users.

# Research Objectives



- How anxiety is related to Instagram?



- What plays a key role in triggering anxiety?



- What is the average use of Instagram among young users in a day?



- Is there a relationship between average use of Instagram and anxiety?



- What group of users are more likely to be get affected by Instagram?

# Research Phases



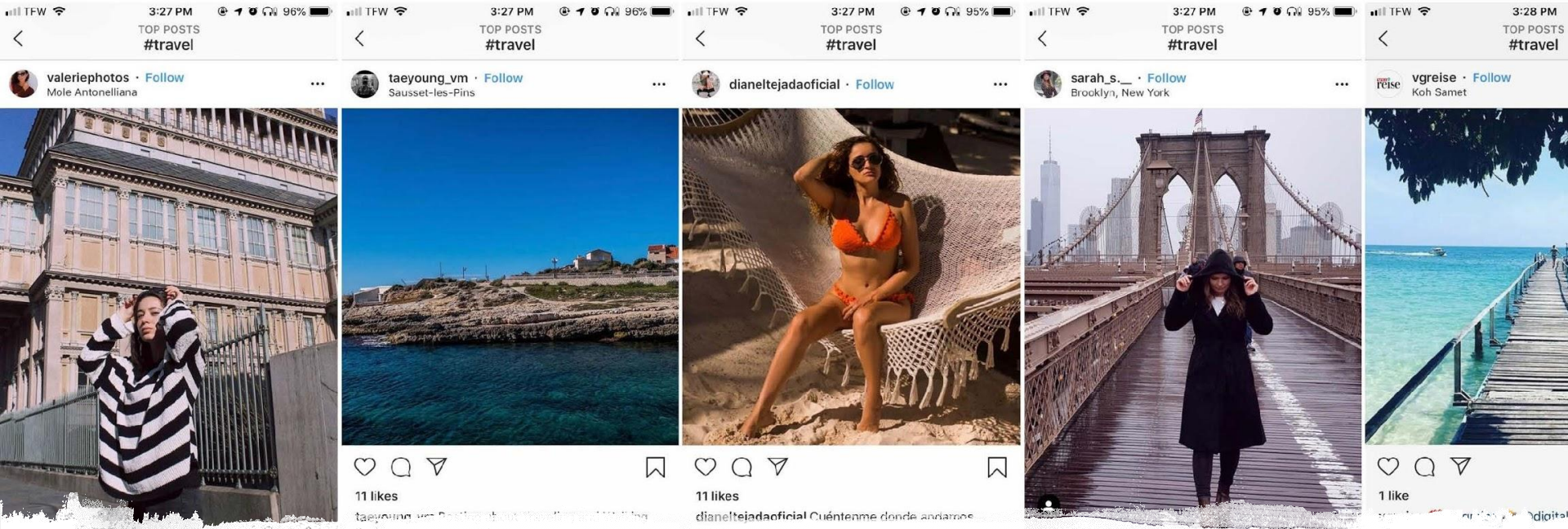
Observations &  
Interviews



Diary Studies



Co Design  
Workshop



## Research Phase 1

# Observations

The purpose of the observation was to understand how people are using Instagram. The results from the observations were later used to plan for interviews.



Research Phase 1

# Observations

Influencers

Public Instagram accounts with

more than 200 followers

#Travel, #Beauty, #Friends,

#Food



Research Phase 1

# Observations

## Findings

- People post more frequently on stories.
- Travel, fitness and beauty/fashion photos are most popular.
- Insta feed is curated on the basis of pictures you like or people you follow
- Insta Trends





Research Phase 1

# Interviews

The core objectives of interviews were to understand how young users are using Instagram and if there are any anxiety triggers among frequent users.

Research Phase 1

# Interviews

## Participants

	Age	Followers	Following	Identify as
Participant 1	22	422	763	Female
Participant 2	19	567	234	Female
Participants 3	21	356	189	Female

Research Phase 1

# Interviews

Interviews were divided into four sections

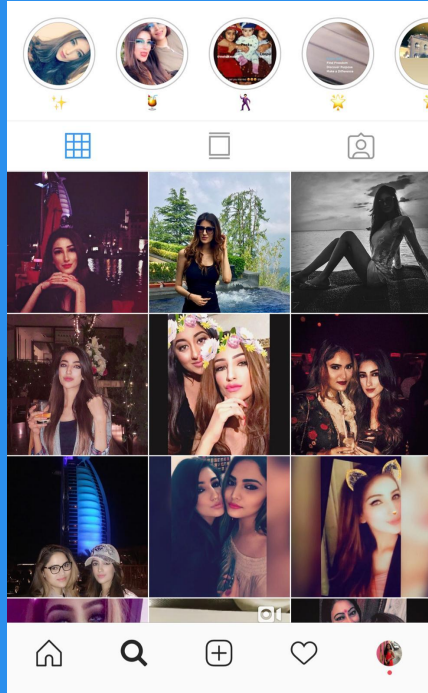
Why they use Instagram

Stories vs Posts

Following & Followers

Anxiety Triggers

*"I am always afraid that I will miss out on something, like a cool artistic event around the corner, or a hip concert, even a book reading. Though I don't read books. I'll get cool pictures there and I can make people believe that I'm an intellectual person".*



*"In this age, Insta is everything. People ask you for your Insta handle before they even ask for your name, you know what I mean?"*

*"I am guilty of staring at women's perfect body pictures on Insta, secretly hoping to look like them one day"*

*"I'm not even fat but I'm not a Victoria secret's model either. The world of Insta is for perfect girls and I'm everything but that. If there is one post on body positivity, there are thousands of comments shaming women on their bodies and I only happen to focus on those thousand comments because that is the reality for me"*



Research Phase 1

# Interviews

## Findings

Frequent use of Instagram can make young user insecure about their bodies.

Unrealistic expectations and feelings of insufficiency and low self-esteem.

Maintaining the online life can make users anxious.

Fear of missing out.



Research Phase 2

# Diary Studies

The purpose of Diary studies was to identify any patterns of anxiety triggers.

Three participants were asked to maintain an Instagram emotions journal for five days

## Research Phase 2

# Diary Studies

How many times did you check Instagram today?

What are the different types of posts you looked at today?

Did you upload a story or post today?

Did you encounter any post that made you uncomfortable in any way?

Why did it make you feel uncomfortable?

## Instagram emotions journal

Thank you so much for helping me with my research. It will be great if you can submit your response around 8PM for five days.

The name and photo associated with your Google account will be recorded when you upload files and submit this form. Not [aimen96@gmail.com](mailto:aimen96@gmail.com)? [Switch account](#)

\* Required

Name \*

Your answer



Date \*

MM DD YYYY







\_\_ / \_\_ / 2019

How many times did you check instagram today? \*

- ☐ Hardly looked at it
- ☐ Probably five times
- ☐ When I was waiting for something
- ☐ Whenever I got some free time
- ☐ Whenever I checked my phone
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Research Phase 2

# Diary Studies

Fashion, Beauty, DIY, Music, Food	Yes	Beauty & Fashion	I was visiting my cousin and she took a portrait picture of me. I was looking very pretty so I thought I should post it.	No		No	Yes		I on a break with my bf and I felt so bad when I looked at this picture of a couple. I feel it triggered something inside me.
Fashion, Beauty, Fitness, Tourism, Music, Food	No			No		No	No		
Fashion, Beauty, Fitness, Music, Food	Yes	Beauty & Fashion	I just randomly took the picture and I really liked it.	Yes		No	No		
Fashion, Beauty, Fitness	No					Yes	No		
Fashion, Beauty, Tourism, Music	Yes	Travel, Beauty & Fashion, Dance & Music	I went to attend an event in a local cafe and my best friend took a very nice candid picture of me.	Yes		No	Yes		In my childhood I was a fat kid and the insecurity stayed with me. Whenever I see someone like this I feel very bad about my body. I wish I could

## Research Phase 2

# Diary Studies

## Analysis

Participant 1	Moderate User	One story in five days	Didn't experience any negative effect	Frequent users are more likely to experience negative emotions
Participant 2	Frequent user	Three posts in five days	Stress over relationships & body image (twice in five days)	
Participant 3	Moderate User	Two posts in four days	A photo from favorite blogger made him uncomfortable/ He was already having a bad day.	

Research Phase 2

# Co Design

**Challenge:** Imagine a photo-sharing social media platform where users are helping each other gain self-esteem.

**Ideation:** 6-8-5

**Illustration:** Sketch the ideas , divide into pairs , each pair creates a storyboard, narrow in on 3-4 key ideas, put each moment in a window , use sketches and dialog, narrate your storyboard for the group

**Iteration:** Vote for your favorite ideas and select the top one, refine it.



Research Phase 2

# Co Design

## **Ideas**

Positive Influencers

A version of Instagram for young users with some restrictions

Some kind of encryptions

Limit the amount of content users are viewing in a day

Set maximum time for young users

One day a month without Instagram

Positive affirmations

Special indication for edited pictures

# Findings & Results



Young users are more vulnerable to the negative effects of Instagram and frequent use of the platform can make them insecure about their bodies.



Frequent use of Instagram can lead to anxiety triggers.



Instagram posts set unrealistic expectations and create feelings of insufficiency and low self-esteem.



Maintaining an online portfolio can make users anxious.

## Recommendations

Instagram can improved the experience for young users by:

- Implementing some limitations for young users
- Setting maximum usage time
- Negative comments filters
- Improving Insta feed

# Possible Next Steps

In depth analysis of different kind of anxiety triggers associated with Instagram

More participants and longer term diary studies

Are there any other negative effects of Instagram other than anxiety?





Questions