



Live Thrifting on Instagram for Full-Time Working Fathers

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: This study seeks to investigate the motivations behind the engagement of employed fathers in full-time positions with live thrifting content on Instagram.

Study Design: The research adopted a constructivist methodology, applying the Uses and Gratification Theory to analyze how full-time working fathers satisfy their needs and desires through engaging with live thrifting content on Instagram.

Place and Duration of Study: The research took place in Tangerang, Indonesia, spanning from October 2023 to May 2024.

Methodology: This research utilized phenomenology, involving interviews with four participants who are full-time employed fathers residing in Tangerang. These individuals typically work outside their homes for 8-12 hours daily, have at least one child, earn at least the Tangerang minimum wage (UMR), and regularly spend a minimum of 2 hours per day engaging with live thrifting content on Instagram.

Results: Within the realm of technological progress, live thrift shopping via Instagram provides an avenue for full-time employed fathers to temporarily break away from the fatigue of their jobs. Engaging in live thrift sessions offers them amusement and pleasure, often causing them to lose track of time. This phenomenon resonates with the Uses and Gratification Theory, suggesting that media consumption is guided by individuals' self-defined needs and objectives.

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Conclusion: Live thrifting on Instagram has become a method for full-time working fathers to preserve their mental well-being amid the stresses and demands of life. They view live thrifting not as a detriment but as a source of entertainment and fulfillment.

Keywords: *Live thrifting; uses and gratification theory; working fathers; social media.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, live streaming has surged in popularity, marking a significant shift in the utilization of digital platforms across various facets of life, including education, retail, and food & beverages. The success of live streaming platforms is bolstered by their diverse media features, allowing streamers to broadcast in real-time. During these broadcasts, streamers typically foster direct engagement with their audience by addressing them directly. This interaction often involves viewers sending questions via the chat column, to which the streamer responds verbally. Moreover, viewers can seamlessly interact with both the streamer and fellow audience members in real-time, overcoming

geographical barriers. The flourishing of live streaming can be attributed to the platforms' ability to satisfy the audience's cravings for information, engagement, and interactive experiences [1].

Additionally, the advent of media convergence enables individuals to access media content regardless of location, time, or device. Ultimately, technological progress has transformed human life by providing a wide array of resources accessible through the internet. Clearly, technology has become ingrained in daily life, leading to what is termed as "social transformation." The convenience and accessibility afforded by technological advancements subtly influence people's behavior [2].

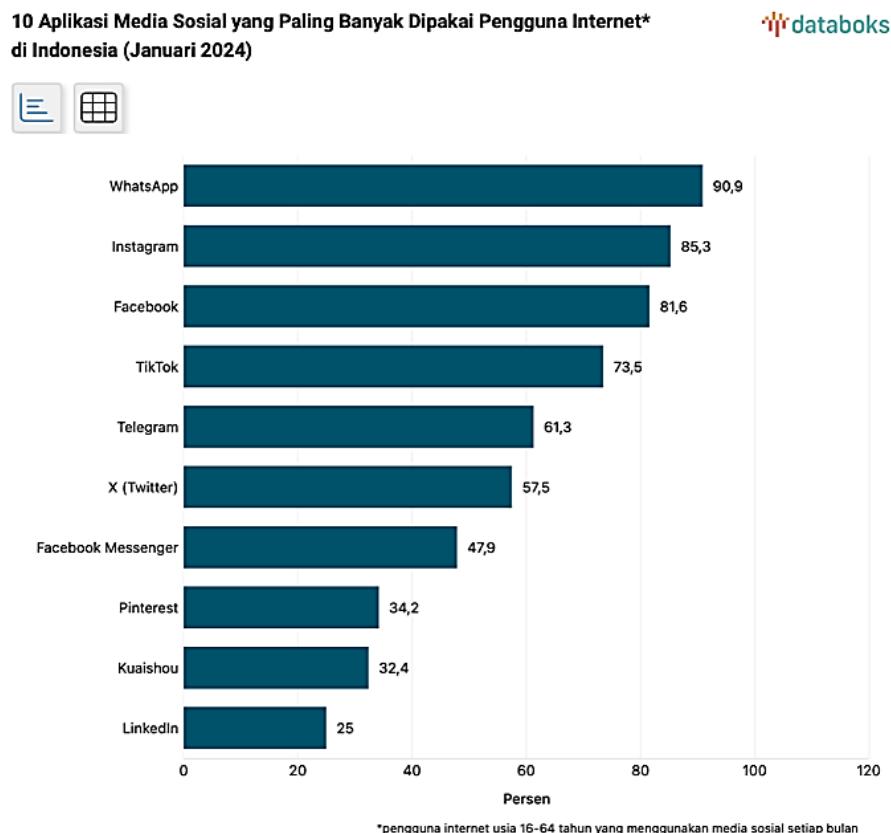


Fig. 1. Media convergence

Source: [3]

We Are Social's data reveals that WhatsApp has emerged as the leading social media application in Indonesia as of January 2024, with a usage rate of 90.9% among Indonesian internet users aged 16 to 64. Following closely behind are Instagram with 85.3% user penetration, Facebook with 81.6%, and TikTok with 73.5%. In aggregate, We Are Social reports a total of 139 million social media user accounts in Indonesia as of January 2024, equivalent to 49.9% of the country's total population. From this data [4]. Hence, it can be deduced that Instagram ranks among the preferences of Indonesians for social networking. Several scholars elucidate that individuals utilize social media for a multitude of reasons, including entertainment, socializing, information acquisition, leisure, unwinding, communication, ease of use, self-expression, information dissemination, and observing or learning about others [5].

Given the diverse functionalities available on Instagram, users are expanding beyond mere photo or video sharing; they are now employing the live video feature as a platform for sales. One notable example is the practice of live thrifting, wherein individuals sell pre-owned items via live Instagram broadcasts. Since "live" implies immediacy, sellers can present their products directly to potential buyers without constraints of distance or location. Consequently, anyone can engage in purchasing without being limited by temporal or geographical disparities, highlighting a key attribute of social media.

Live video as one of the features offered by Instagram provides quality information and interaction features to its users [6]. This fosters rapid interpersonal connections between the viewer and the individual featured in the live video, facilitated by a reciprocal process. This is particularly evident during live thrifting sessions, where sellers can offer details to establish a sense of trust and enhance the quality of real-time interaction.

Herbert Blumer and Elihu Katz, in their 1974 publication "The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research," assert that individuals engage with media with specific objectives in mind. Essentially, this suggests that people possess autonomy and control in their interactions with media, as they have diverse motivations for its use. Moreover, individuals have the liberty to determine the manner in which they utilize media (via which channels) and how media

consumption influences them. (Ruliana & Lestari, 2019). The driving mechanism of media use in uses and gratification theory is need satisfaction, while understanding needs helps explain the reasons and impact of media use itself.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory discusses the circumstances under which individuals, as media consumers, become more or less engaged in media usage, and the resulting outcomes of such engagement. From the viewpoint of this theory, society is viewed as an active participant in the communication process, albeit with varying degrees of activity across different societal groups. Media consumption is influenced by the needs and objectives identified by the community itself. This theory elucidates the conditions and mechanisms through which audiences, as media consumers, increase or decrease their activity in media usage, along with the effects of media consumption [7].

According to Blumer and Katz in (Ruliana & Lestari, 2019) There are five assumptions related to uses and gratification theory, namely:

1. Individuals utilize media according to their specific objectives. This initial premise, as proposed by Katz, underscores the active engagement of individuals who actively select and engage with mass media content, rather than passively receiving it. People possess the autonomy to choose and engage with media content as per their preferences.
2. Individuals seek to fulfill their needs through media consumption. Satisfaction serves as the fundamental driver behind an individual's media usage. Ultimately, understanding media usage hinges on identifying the needs that individuals seek to satisfy when selecting media content.
3. Media competes for individuals' attention and time. Mass media contends with various other sources in fulfilling individuals' needs. Understanding the motivations behind media consumption requires an examination of the needs that drive individuals' choices amidst competing alternatives.
4. Media impacts individuals in diverse ways. Given the diversity within society, the outcomes and satisfaction derived from media consumption vary among

individuals. These individual differences shape the responses and experiences of media consumers.

5. Individuals possess the ability to articulate their media usage and motivations. It is imperative to inquire into the reasons underlying individuals' media consumption. However, a contentious issue arises regarding the accuracy of individuals' self-reporting of their motivations for media consumption.

Using the Uses and Gratification Theory, this study aims to exploit the reasons why full-time working fathers consume live thrifting on Instagram.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a constructivist approach where the truth of a social reality is seen as the result of social construction and the validity of a social reality is relative. Research with this approach studies the various realities constructed by individuals and the implications of these constructions for their lives with others [8]. In constructionism, each individual has a unique experience.

In the digital age, social media users, such as those on Instagram, have extensive access to a diverse array of content catering to various needs and preferences. By employing the Uses and Gratifications theory as a tool, researchers can gain insights into why full-time working fathers engage in live thrifting on Instagram. This theory examines how individuals utilize media content to satisfy their needs and desires. In the context of full-time working fathers, their behaviors can be elucidated through an examination of their media consumption patterns and interests. Central to this theory is the notion that media users actively select the content they consume and possess a clear understanding of their motivations for doing so. In the case of live thrifting on Instagram, this theory is particularly relevant for two primary reasons: first, users, specifically full-time working fathers, actively opt for live video for their engagements, and second, they are fully cognizant of the reasons driving their choice.

Interviews were undertaken with four full-time employed fathers, each working 8-12 hours daily. These individuals are characterized by their busy schedules, as a significant portion of their time is

devoted to work outside the home. The selection of participants involved specific criteria, including being fathers with at least one child, earning above the Tangerang minimum wage (UMR), and actively engaging in live thrifting via the Instagram platform for a minimum of two hours per session over the past two months. Informants for this study were referred by one another, suggesting shared interests and behaviors in watching live thrifting. To maintain informants' confidentiality, pseudonyms such as F1 (father 1), F2 (father 2), F3 (father 3), and F4 (father 4) were assigned by the researcher.

This type of research used in this study is phenomenology which focuses on the subjective experience of individuals, namely to understand why full-time working fathers consume live thrifting on Instagram [9]. Phenomenological research focuses on a person's conscious experience of a phenomenon is something that is actively understandable and can be explored more so that this has the ability to be used as a theoretical basis [10]. Phenomenology is in a very subjective scope so that the real experience of individuals can be used as the main data in reality and this is reinforced by Maurice Merleau Ponty in Littlejhon who states that all scientific doubts are obtained from several experiences of the world [10].

Data gathering involved employing in-depth interview methodologies with four participants. Researchers conducted multiple in-depth interviews with each informant until reaching data saturation. The objective was to capture the perspectives of the research subjects regarding their experiences or circumstances, articulated in their own words. These interviews constitute the primary data source for this study.

The collected data underwent analysis, involving the exclusion of irrelevant information. The presentation of data in this study comprises transcripts of interview quotes, categorized based on elements relevant to the theoretical framework utilized. Additionally, researchers incorporated findings from several literature reviews, which served as supplementary sources for analyzing the research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Relaxation from Office Problems

Amidst global efforts to adapt to restrictions on daily interactions enforced by social distancing

measures and COVID-19 preventive protocols, the significance of social media platforms that foster integration and connection with others has escalated in everyday life. Facebook and Instagram, among these platforms, are acknowledged as two of the foremost social networking sites (SNS) in contemporary times [11]. According to research that has been conducted by Asiaty & Septadiyanto, [12] there are no differences in the characteristics of social media users based on gender and religion. This apparently also applies to full-time working fathers who have spent their time working all day outside the home to fulfil their obligations.

Watching live thrifting serves as a means for full-time employed fathers to unwind and relax their minds. F2 expressed, "Yes, I spend all day working outdoors, seldom using my phone, constantly preoccupied with work goals... watching live thrifting just refreshes my mind." F2's sentiment resonates with F3's observation, who mentioned watching live thrifting as a post-work respite: "Typically, I tune in to live thrifting once I'm back home from work. It's akin to taking a breather after work fatigue; engaging in something enjoyable rejuvenates my spirits."

In line with the Uses and Gratification theory, it is elucidated that individuals engage with media driven by their own identified needs and objectives. The statements of F2 and F3 shed light on how full-time employed fathers utilize live thrifting consumption as a coping mechanism for the stress and pressure stemming from their work commitments. They turn to live thrifting as a method to unwind and alleviate stress following extended periods of work away from home. This aligns with the premise of the Uses and Gratification theory, which underscores that individuals utilize media to fulfill their psychological needs, including the desire for entertainment and relaxation.

Engaging in live thrifting enables full-time employed fathers to experience the gratification of rejuvenating their minds and uplifting their mood following a lengthy day away from home. This pursuit offers them a delightful and invigorating respite from the stresses of work. Viewing live thrifting as a mode of recuperation and revitalization, they allocate time for enjoyable and uplifting activities after enduring a demanding work routine. By indulging in such leisure, they can return to work with a renewed mindset and improved spirits. Psychologically, the utilization of social media, including live

thrift, can evoke happiness among users due to its user-friendly nature and convenience [13].

In the framework of the Uses and Gratification theory, live thrifting on Instagram acts as a conduit for meeting the need for relaxation. This platform enables full-time employed fathers to conveniently access engaging and enjoyable content and schedule their viewing time according to their post-work availability. The statements of F2 and F3 offer perspective on how media aids individuals in managing stress and preserving their work-life equilibrium [14].

3.2 Self-Satisfaction

F1 in his interview revealed that he feels satisfied if he can watch live thrifting until the end. With a duration of about 2-3 hours once live, this makes a full-time working father complacent and ignores time "*How yes, sometimes I like to forget the time when watching. Suddenly I see the clock, it's already 1am. But I still continue until the end because if I stop I'm afraid I'll miss the good stuff*". This was also experienced by F2 because she felt satisfied when she could watch live thrifting until the end "*the concept of live thrifting is first come, first served, so if I watch until the end and can get some items that I like. It feels like I'm happy. I'm satisfied, it's not a waste of sleep*".

Drawing from the accounts of F1 and F2, it becomes evident that they derive satisfaction from watching live thrifting sessions to completion, as it addresses several of their needs. Specifically, they find fulfillment in acquiring desired items at reasonable prices, seeking entertainment, and experiencing the thrill of obtaining rare or distinctive items through live thrifting. Moreover, engaging in live thrifting empowers full-time employed fathers to assert control over their shopping endeavors, managing their time and actions despite the potential risk of missing out on coveted items if they discontinue participation.

Furthermore, involvement in live thrifting satisfies the need for social interaction, albeit through a digital platform. Interacting with sellers and fellow viewers engenders a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding, heightening their self-satisfaction. Naturally, live thrifting offers a distinct experience from traditional in-store or online shopping. F1 and F2 derive satisfaction from successfully securing desired items through the competitive and exhilarating nature of live

thrifting, enhancing their sense of accomplishment. Consequently, it can be inferred that live thrifting on the Instagram platform furnishes satisfaction for full-time employed fathers through the fulfillment of various needs, exercise of self-control, social engagement, and unique experiences that augment their self-contentment.

3.3 Social Interaction

F1, F2, and F4, colleagues in the same office, share a common interest: they enjoy tuning in to live thrifting sessions. Frequently, they schedule to convene and watch live thrifting broadcasts together once they have reached their individual homes. F4 said in her statement "*yes, we usually if we already know where we want to watch live thrifting, then we make an appointment. Usually, when I get home while eating, I watch while diving to drink water.*" Uniquely F1 said that when they arrived at the office the next day they would discuss what they were looking for in the live thrifting session "*When we get to the office, we usually break together too. Well later we like to chat about what items were good yesterday, watch until what time, or whatever. In fact, sometimes we like to look for the next live thrifting that has the potential to have good and rare items. The thing is, not all live thrifting has good items. So we usually look at the Instagram posts first.*" On the other hand, F2 feels that since they regularly watch live thrifting, there are just topics of conversation and not a few other friends will join in and become curious "*the funny thing is that I feel that since I like watching live thrifting, we have something to talk about. In fact, sometimes when there are other friends who are hanging out together, they listen. It makes them curious too.*"

The accounts of F1, F2, and F4 vividly illustrate how social media consumption, such as live thrifting, not only addresses individual needs but also fosters social interaction and the formation of communities with shared interests. Utilizing live thrifting as a form of entertainment, they utilize these sessions as a means to unwind and escape from the demands of their work routines, often indulging in them even during after-work activities like dinner. This underscores the efficacy of social media as a source of entertainment for full-time employed fathers seeking relaxation after a demanding day.

Furthermore, live thrifting consumption offers F1, F2, and F4 opportunities to engage socially with

their fellow office mates who share similar interests. They frequently gather to watch these sessions together on their devices, exchanging thoughts on their experiences and the items showcased during the broadcasts. Such interactions strengthen their social bonds and create a platform for sharing experiences and common interests. Additionally, tuning into live thrifting enables them to explore the array of items available and exchange information about rare or unique finds. F1 even mentioned their anticipation for upcoming live thrifting events with the potential for remarkable items, sparking discussions in the office and attracting the interest of other colleagues who join in the excitement.

In summary, the engagement of F1, F2, and F4 in live thrifting caters to their diverse social needs and offers a platform for interaction and communal experiences with other like-minded friends. Serving as a conversational catalyst, social media consumption such as live thrifting cultivates an environment for dialogue, discovery, and community development. This aligns with the principles of the Uses and Gratification Theory, which underscore that individuals utilize social media to meet their unique needs and objectives.

3.4 Communication with Family

Live thrifting, conducted in real-time, doesn't allow full-time employed fathers to dedicate their complete attention to the event. They believe that the "first come, first served" nature of thrifting might hinder their chances of acquiring desired items, causing them to overlook their surroundings, including their families, while engrossed in live thrifting sessions.

F3 said that sometimes the consumption of live thrifting that he likes to do after work creates conflict in the family. The spouse who feels like being cared for is in fact ignored because the husband is focused on watching live thrifting "*Yes, sometimes my wife likes to nag me. She says I'm too busy with my mobile phone, until I don't pay attention to her talking*" "*Sometimes if she's already cranky, she goes straight up to the room, upstairs*". Similarly, F2 explains how live thrifting often makes him partner feel uncared for "*She gets angry. Especially when I come home and the kids are still asleep. This is usually what makes her angry*". But in fact, when the spouses of F3 and F2 often oppose what their husbands do, F3 and F2 still continue the live thrifting they

are watching because they consider this as self-reward and considered a rare opportunity, especially if there are some good items in the live thrifting session "*It's like live thrifting is hockey-hockey. Not every live thrifting is good. Sometimes I've been looking for hours but there are no items that are okay for me. So it's okay to watch live thrifting. If I'm with my wife, I'll see her every morning, and I'll see her every evening*".

In contrast to F1's confession where his spouse never questioned his live thrifting viewing habits because it was considered as a reward for the hard work done by her husband in the office "*fortunately, my wife doesn't do anything. So far she's okay if I watch it. Mostly when the kids aren't asleep, she asks me to kiss or hug them first. Maybe it's also because I usually watch it in the room, so she likes to join in. So now he knows what rare brands of men's clothes are, why the prices can be expensive*".

Live thrifting consumption serves as a form of entertainment and an avenue for full-time working fathers to acquire desired items. The "first come, first served" principle inherent in thrifting instills a sense of urgency to secure rare items, potentially diverting attention away from their immediate surroundings, including family members. This consumption pattern may lead to communication conflicts with family members, particularly spouses, as reduced interaction and attention during live thrifting sessions can evoke feelings of neglect and tension. Couples may perceive themselves as unappreciated or inadequately attended to, resulting in relationship discord.

However, family responses to live thrifting can vary significantly. While some partners may feel neglected and lonely, others may view and support the habit as a well-deserved reward for the husband's hard work. These differing reactions underscore variations in perception and adaptation to individual habits within the family dynamic. The consumption of live thrifting by full-time employed fathers undoubtedly fulfills their entertainment and achievement needs, yet it can also precipitate conflicts in communication within the family unit.

4. CONCLUSION

The research findings demonstrate that engaging in live thrifting via the Instagram platform offers full-time working fathers a multifaceted experience, providing relaxation from workplace

stress, personal gratification, and opportunities for social interaction. This media consumption serves as a means for them to alleviate work pressures, alleviate stress, and experience satisfaction upon successfully acquiring desired items. Moreover, live thrifting serves as a catalyst for conversation among colleagues with shared interests, fostering an environment for exchanging experiences and cultivating a community with similar interests. However, the consumption of live thrifting also adversely impacts communication with family members, particularly in terms of neglecting attention towards one's spouse, leading to conflicts.

From an academic standpoint, the study findings contribute to understanding how social media, specifically live thrifting on Instagram, fulfills various individual needs within the context of everyday life. Employing the Uses and Gratification Theory approach, the study underscores the significance of comprehending how individuals utilize social media to attain psychological satisfaction, cope with stress, and strike a balance between work and personal life. Furthermore, the findings suggest that social media consumption not only influences individuals on an individual level but also shapes social interactions and family dynamics. Consequently, it is imperative to continually enhance our understanding of the role of social media in shaping behavior and communication patterns across diverse life contexts.

As a recommendation, future research endeavors could delve into the long-term effects of social media consumption, encompassing activities like live thrifting, on interpersonal relationships. Such investigations could significantly advance the field of communication science and deepen our comprehension of the role of social media in contemporary society.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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