An Exploratory Study of Criminology Students' Perception to Relative Deprivation in Using Social Media Sites

Jamaica Kim Lopez Mabanglo
College of Criminal Justice Education
Philippine College of Science and Technology,
Old Nalsian Road, Nalsian, Calasiao, Pangasinan, Philippines, 2418

Abstract:- Browsing social media sites portrays every person is leading a worthier life than your own. When a person feels that they are generally worse off than the people they associate with or the standards set by the society they live in, this will result in comparison, at that point, relative deprivation may emerge. Ordinarily, there will always be others who can have more. Nevertheless, even those people who can achieve beyond may sometime feel deprived since they cannot stop to compare themselves and what they have. People may feel deprivation since there is no contentment. Hence, the objective of this study is to determine the perception of the Philippine College of Science and Technology's criminology students to relative deprivation using social media sites. The study used a qualitative research design specifically an exploratory approach. Consequently, the interview was aided by an interview guide which is semi structured in nature and the data gathered were analyzed using qualitative content analysis method. As a result, the perception of the participants in comparing themselves to others based on their social media exposure is discontentment, envy, and motivation. Moreover, it was concluded that relative deprivation can assist individuals in recognizing their potential and motivating them to reach on the possessions or feelings they feel deprived of which can be harnessed and used for creating positive outcomes. However, relative deprivation does have certain negative impacts such as discontentment and envy, it served as a motivating factor for the participants to strive more.

Keywords:- Perception, Relative Deprivation, Social Media Sites, Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Content is fire, social media is gasoline (Baer, 2013). Nowadays, people are engaging in social media sites to attract people. It has the power to connect and share information with everyone. It is being used to keep connected with the people in the world. Others used it in their career or even finding someone with the same interests, likes, and emotions (Dollarhide, 2019).

Consequently, using social media sites have its advantage as well as negative impact to everyone. It can affect people and create inattentiveness, stress, and jealousy (Dollarhide, 2019). Nowadays, since we are on a generation that use technology, everyone can access and use social media sites. Furthermore, since it has an impact to the lots of individuals, according to a study carried out at the University of Copenhagen, people start to feel envious when they compare their everyday lives with other people especially when they perceive it in social media sites. When an individual feel prey for comparison, then it can cause inferiority or the feeling of being deprived (Hill, n.d.). This is the feeling when browsing social media portrays everyone is leading a life better than your own. And it is all too easy to become jealous of others on social media such as vacation photos, engagement announcements, wedding shoots, new phones, dream cars, dream houses and a lot of things.

Conversely, as a timeworn adage goes, "The neighbor's grass is always greener". People are normally tended to track their progress and evaluate their possessions through comparison with others which is dependent with their achievements and others (Sabatini & Sarracino, 2015). When a person feels that they are generally worse off than the people they associate with or the standards set by the society lives in, thus, this will result in comparison, then, relative deprivation may emerge.

Ordinarily, there will always be somebody with more attention, more fame, more material possessions, and more happiness than the others. There will always be people who can travel any parts of the world like they do not need to work, who seems to have a complete family, who can taste delicious food, who have more degrees, people having successful lives, and living the way they can ever dreamed of. Nevertheless, even those people who can achieve more, they may sometime feel deprived since they cannot stop to compare themselves and what they have. People feel deprivation because there is no contentment.

Thus, the researcher became interested to conduct a study to determine the impact of social media sites in relation to relative deprivation. This will serve as an avenue for the researcher to determine if the participants are affected with the use of social media sites as well as in understanding them through their perception in comparison to others when engaging in social media sites.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Notwithstanding, the concept of relative deprivation helps to explain the irony which seems to increase crime in an increasing wealth society. Though people experience better living, they might experience relative deprivation as well due to the media seeming irony of increasing crime in the context of an increasing wealthy society. Though people are better off today, they have a greater feeling of relative deprivation for the reason that the advertisements and media fuel the people to raise the expectation for material possessions. Yet people are wealthy, they also feel poorer since there is a pressure to acquire more obsessions and to keep up with everyone else because it is a trend (ReviseSociology, 2016). When people start comparing themselves with others, people may feel deprived or entitled to something better based on their comparison (Teasley, n.d.)

Likewise, in the generation where social media sites arise, it is much easier to be envious of someone than being pleased for their achievements or possessions. Social media sites users can realize endless best moments from everyone including family, friends, celebrities and even strangers. It seems that engaging in social media sites is a constant reminder that no matter how much an individual can have, there is always someone who can have more (Muchoki, 2020).

In relation, a study conducted by Cho in Korea which has a main goal of exploring the potential indirect effects of social media use on relative deprivation, he focused on two mediators which are the communication with influential others and social capital. The researcher used a systematic analysis of social capital's mediating effects of connecting social media use with relative deprivation and the findings of the study suggest that social media use can be indirectly associated with relative deprivation (Cho, 2014).

In contrary, another study conducted by Sabatini and Sarracino where it tested a hypothesis whether there is an expanding people's disappointment while utilizing social networking sites. The research is conducted to determine if there is a social comparison using social networking sites. The results of the study suggest that social networking sites users have a higher probability to compare their achievements with those of others (Sabatini & Sarracino, 2015).

III. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a qualitative research design specifically an exploratory approach to acquire an understanding of primary reasons, opinions, and motivations of the participants of the study. Furthermore, exploratory research was used since there are only few studies conducted in relation to the problem which is relative deprivation and social media sites.

In addition, the participants of the study were the criminology students who are officers of the main organization of the College of Criminal Justice Education in Philippine College of Science and Technology. The participants were chosen through convenience random sampling. Accordingly, they are chosen in the study for the reason that they belong to the most convenient population. In addition, to support this, according to the Pew Research Center, social media users tend to be younger. Almost 90 percent of individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 utilized at least one form of social media site (Dollarhide, 2019).

Moreover, the researcher used One-to-One interviews directly from the interviewee through phone calls which were recorded as permitted by the participants. Consequently, the interview was aided by an interview guide which is semi structured in nature while the method used by the researcher in transcribing the interview was the intelligent verbatim transcription since it provides a more readable transcript while staying true to the voice and intended meaning of the participants. The data gathered were analyzed using qualitative content analysis method. Further, the content analysis was used since it is easier to understand patterns in the data which is also appropriate in order to understand the participants' perception on the study.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the interview analysis about the perception of the participants in comparing themselves to others based on social media exposure.

The Perception of the Participants in Comparing Themselves to Others Based on Social Media Exposure

Upon analysis of the qualitative data, the researcher has identified three major themes in the perception of the participants in comparing themselves to others based on social media sites exposure, these themes are: Discontentment, Envy, and Motivation.

Discontentment. The researcher identified that the participants perceived discontentment in their life. Accordingly, they feel that they are not yet contented on what they have right now. This suggests that even though they have already the possessions they wanted, still, they want more. To support this, a study of Schulze & Krätschmer-Hahn in 2014 stated that a person will be relatively deprived if the individual feel anger or dissatisfaction due to the comparison with others. Thus, relative deprivation has an impact of discontentment to people, it will make people realize that even they have the things already, they will still be craving for more.

Moreover, one of the participants said, she does not feel contented due to the "attraction in social media". She was being attracted with the things in the social media resulting in relative deprivation. According to ReviseSociology, though people are living better nowadays, they still feel relative deprivation because of the media and

advertisements that have raised everyone's expectations for material possessions.

Furthermore, another participant mentioned "to be on trend". This suggest that yet people are wealthy, they also feel poorer since there is a pressure to acquire more obsessions and to keep up with everyone else because it is a trend.

Additionally, as indicated by Dr. Rubin Khoddam, a Clinical Psychologist, he referenced in his article that it's not all about needing more, yet finding reality that wherever place individuals are, there will consistently be something more to go after (Khoddam, 2014).

Conversely, relative deprivation is the experience of being denied of something to which one accepts to be entitled. It alludes to the discontent individuals feel when they compare their situations with others and understand that they have less of what they trust themselves to be entitled than everyone around them (Lumen, n.d.)

Hence, in the event that individuals have no motivation to expect or seek after beyond what they can accomplish, they will be less unhappy with what they have, or even appreciative essentially to be able to hold to it. But if, contrariwise, they have been directed to see as a potential objective of some progressively community with which they can directly compare themselves, then they will remain discontented with their lot until they have succeeded in catching up (Social Aspects of Epidemiology, n.d.)

What's more, despite the fact that a few people are wealthy than the others, they feel deprived on the grounds that there is no contentment.

Envy. When the researcher asked what is the perception of the participants in comparing themselves to others in social media sites, most of them answered the same content. Majority of the participants mentioned they feel envious. The data from the participants suggest that envy is the primary perception they feel when they cannot get what others have. The theme is in relation to the first theme that was analyzed in the study. To support this, according to Dollarhide, using social media sites have its advantage, it has also negative impact to everyone since it can affect people and create inattentiveness, stress, and jealousy (Dollarhide, 2019).

Furthermore, in the era where social media sites arise, it is a lot simpler to be desirous of somebody than being satisfied for their accomplishments or assets. Social media sites users can perceive almost everything from everybody including family, companions, famous people and even outsiders. It appears that taking part in social media sites is a constant reminder that regardless of how much an individual can have, there is consistently somebody who can have more (Muchoki, 2020).

Besides, as per study conducted at the University of Copenhagen, individuals begin to feel jealous when they compare their regular day to day existences and others' feature reel. At the point when an individual fall into trap of comparing with the private self and others' open personas, thus, at that point, the individual will feel inferior or deprived (Hill, n.d.).

In addition, a study conducted by Sabatini & Sarracino suggest that individuals have the intrinsic inclination to keep tabs on their development and evaluate their self-esteem by comparing themselves with others. Therefore, fulfillment unequivocally relies upon the assets and accomplishments of people. (Sabatini and Sarracino, 2015). At the point when people feel that they are commonly worse off than the other individuals they associated with or the standards set by the society they live in, then, at that point, relative deprivation may develop.

Consequently, this basically been supported by the theories used in the study. The outcomes of envy and individual relative deprivation are almost consistently negative. The costs forced by such sentiments on people, associations, and social orders recommend that it should comprehend their basic causal systems. Relative deprivation has generous union with hypothetical work encompassing envy. Subsequently, envy is comprehensively characterized as a difficult sentiment of mediocrity, antagonistic vibe, and hatred when someone else or other people have an ideal advantage (reviewed in Smith and Kim, 2007).

Accordingly, relative deprivation and envy originate from different fields. Relative deprivation was initially imagined as a sociological construct, though envy was considered as an absolutely psychological construct. The isolation of brain research and human science has brought about the nonattendance of examinations testing the cover among envy and individual relative deprivation. Envy is seldom described as a factor impacting cultural results and there has not been an examination concerning the psychological mechanisms of relative deprivation. Envy and relative deprivation have another key reasonable contrast in that envy seems to have distinct malicious and benign forms, however on the other hand, relative deprivation has just been considered as a unitary construct (Crusius and Lange, 2015; Smith et al.).

Also, relative deprivation must get from perceptions of unfairness (Smith et al., 2012). Envy, then again, probably won't require impression of undeservingness, however rather motivate people to manufacture or overstate proof of injustice to legitimize their envy to themselves and, all the more significantly, to third party observers (Smith and Kim, 2007). A view of another's deservingness is a positive indicator of benign envy, however a negative indicator of malicious envy (van de Ven et al., 2009). Hence, there is no experimental work which exists in testing whether the relative deprivation is related to any type of envy, however, relative deprivation might be similar to envy proper or malicious envy (Novakowski, 2017).

Motivation. The researcher also noted that, despite the fact that the participants feel envy in comparing themselves to others in social media sites, they find that being envious is a typical thing and furthermore a turning point. The participants stated that even they feel envious, they will utilize that feeling as their motivation in making progress toward success and to get what they truly wanted. Participants mentioned that they will use it as an "inspiration" and "to strive more". Furthermore, it serves as their fuel in achieving more which suggests that deprivation can push them to work harder to attain their goals in life.

Contrariwise, it contradicts the study of Greitemeyer & Sagioglou which suggest that aggression may emerge when experiencing relative deprivation (Greitemeyer & Sagioglou, 2018). As well as the study conducted by Cho in Korea in which the findings of the study suggest that social media use can be indirectly associated with relative deprivation (Cho, 2014).

Furthermore, to support this, according to Richard Butler, a success coach based in Ireland, stated that the main about deprivation is that, whenever people are deprived of something, people tend to do everything just to get it. He stated that deprivation is a good motivation. Deprivation causes people to do things that they don't frequently do and it urges individuals to face determined challenges (Butler, 2009). To put it plainly, deprivation motivates individuals to succeed. Being deprived of something has the ability to make an individual appreciates more on what he has.

On the contrary, in spite of the fact that relative deprivation appears to be a negative mechanism, it very well may be utilized as a versatile instrument to make change. On the off chance that an individual is tolerating of their circumstance, they will never have the motivation to evolve and advance in all areas of their life, therefore, sentiments of relative deprivation are important for empowering change.

In addition, relative deprivation may rouse change in numerous structures, a feeling just an individual have less than of what others, can push individuals to work more diligently towards their objectives, and it has been featured in a study conducted by Watanabe (2007) who suggest that individuals who feel relatively deprived will meet up to inspire change.

Moreover, the investigation featured the significant impact that relative deprivation can have on making social movements which empower positive change in a society, and exhibited that the individuals who perceive the difference between their aspirations and reality will regularly be engaged with social developments (Watanabe, 2007). The comprehension of relative deprivation can be applied to something other than political and social changes, hence, people utilize relative deprivation as a motivating component to make change in their lives, utilizing the advancement of others to help motivate them to conquer the difficulties they confront and satisfy their own desires, on the off chance that they accept they have the instruments to do as such.

V. CONCLUSION

Relative deprivation through the use of social media sites can assist individuals in recognizing their potential and motivating them to reach on the things or feelings they feel deprived of which can be harnessed and used for creating positive outcomes. However, relative deprivation does have some negative impacts such as discontentment and envy, it served as a motivating factor for the participants to strive more.

REFERENCES

[1]. Baer, J. (2013, July 29). Content is Fire and Social Media is Gasoline. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from http://sparksheet.com/content-is-fire-and-social-media-is-gasoline/

[2]. Butler, R. (2009, July 02). Deprivation Is A Good Motivation. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://www.slideshare.net/RichardButler/deprivation-is-a-good-motivation

[3]. Cho, J. (2014). Will Social Media Use Reduce Relative Deprivation? Systematic Analysis of Social Capital's Mediating Effects of Connecting Social Media Use with Relative Deprivation. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/viewFile/2628/1255

[4]. Daddey & Armstrong. (2017, March 27). Impact of Social Media on Law Enforcement Practices. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://jibc.arcabc.ca/islandora/object/jibc%3A814/datastream/PDF/view

[5]. Dollarhide, M. (2019, May 02). Social Media Definition. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media.asp

[6]. Greitemeyer & Sagioglou. (2018, June 05). The impact of personal relative deprivation on aggression over time. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00224545.2018.1549013

[7]. Hill, J. (n.d.). How Social Media Is Making You Feel Bad about Yourself Every Day. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://www.lifehack.org/600150/how-social-media-fuels-jealousy

[8]. Khoddam, R. (2014, July 09) . Why You May Never Be Truly Satisfied, and Why That's Okay. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-addiction-connection/201407/why-you-may-never-be-truly-satisfied-and-why-thats-okay

[9]. Lumen. (n.d.). Social Movements. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/social-movements/

[10]. Muchoki, B. (2020, March 16). How to Replace Your Social Media Jealousy with Inspiration. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://everydaypower.com/replace-your-social-media-jealousy-with-inspiration/

[11]. Novakowski, D. (2017). EMBODIED CAPITAL, ENVY, AND RELATIVE DEPRIVATION. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://ourspace.uregina.ca/bitstream/handle/10294/8486/NOVAKOWSKI_Dallas_200291782_MA_EAP_Spring2018.pdf

[12]. ReviseSociology.com(2016, September 06). Left Realist Criminology. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://revisesociology.com/tag/relative-deprivation/

[13]. Sabatini & Sarracino. (2015, July 31). Keeping up with the e-Joneses: Do online social networks raise social comparisons?. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/65874/1/MPRA_paper_65874.pdf

[14]. Schulze M., & Krätschmer-Hahn R. (2014) .Relative Deprivation Theory. In: Michalos A.C. (eds) Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research. Springer, Dordrecht. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-94-007-0753-5_2457

[15]. Social Aspects of Epidemiology (n.d.). Relative Deprivation and Social Justice. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://www.med.uottawa.ca/courses/epi6181/Course_Outline/Sociology_Relative_Deprivation.htm

[16]. Solis, B. (2007, June 28). Defining Social Media. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://www.briansolis.com/2007/06/defining-social-media/

[17]. Teasley, D. (n.d.). Relative Deprivation in Psychology: Theory & Definition. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://study.com/academy/lesson/relative-deprivation-in-psychology-theory-definition.html

[18]. Walker, I., & Pettigrew, T. F. (1984). Relative deprivation theory: An overview and conceptual critique. British Journal of Social Psychology, 23(4), 301–310. Retrieved on March 23, 2020 from https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1984.tb00645.x

[19]. Watanabe, T. (2007). International comparison on the occurrence of social movements. Journal of Business research. 60, 806-812, DOI:10.1016/j.jbusres.2007.01.008. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Motivation_and_emotion/Book/2019/Relative_deprivation_and_emotion