

Social Interaction and Praise-Seeking Needs Drive Subjective Well-Being in Social Media Users:

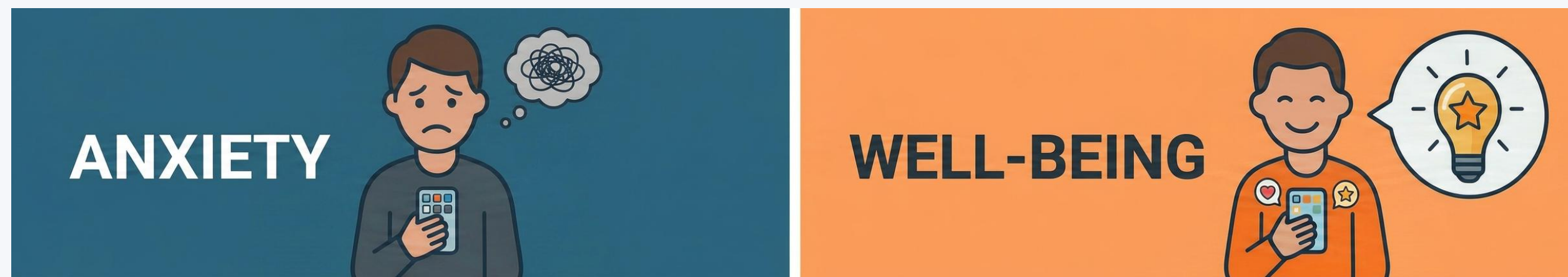
A Generational Analysis of 4,031 Japanese Social Media Users

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BACKGROUND

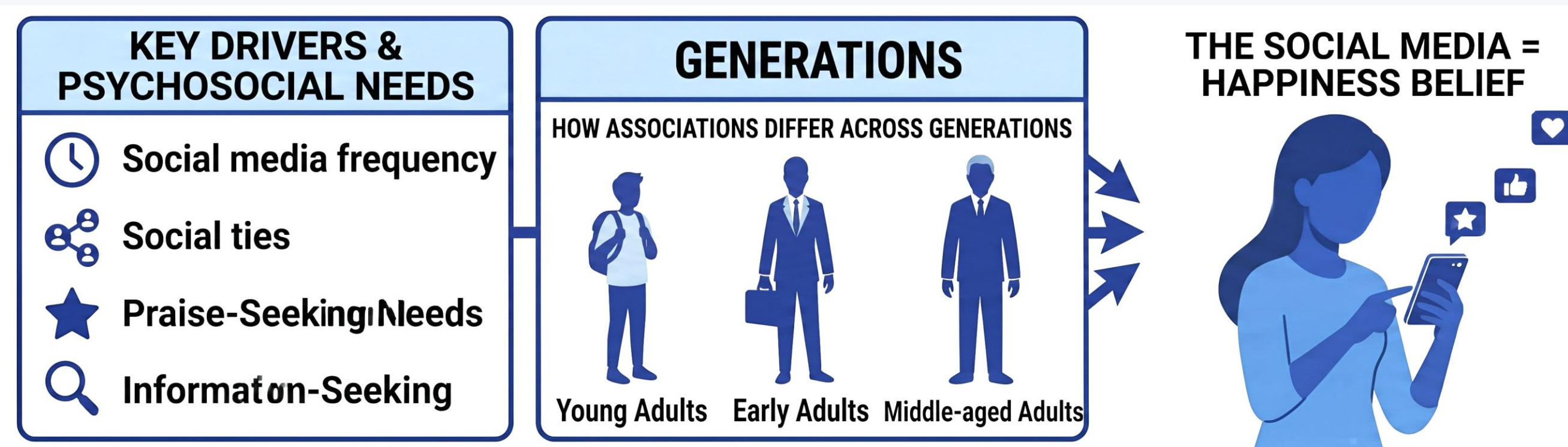
While social media is often linked to anxiety, a significant portion of users report a **subjective sense of enhanced well-being**. This study examines the psychological mechanisms underlying this positive perception, highlighting **praise-seeking needs** and **generational differences**.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1 Which psychological and usage-related factors are associated with perceived well-being benefits from social media?

RQ2 How do these associations differ across age groups?



METHODS

SURVEY Online | N = 4,031 | Social Media Users | Ages 15–59 | Japan

| Ages 15–24 | Ages 25–39 | Ages 40–59 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| n = 743 Young Adults | n = 1,360 Early Adults | n = 1,928 Middle-Aged Adults |

MEASURES

Dependent Variable (DV)

"Using social media increases my happiness"

Binary: Agree vs. Disagree

Predictors

- Social media use frequency (X, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok)
- Social media usage purposes (PCA): Interaction | Information
 - Interaction - e.g., "Interact with friends," "Interact with online contacts," "Post my thoughts and feelings"
 - Information - e.g., "Get hobby/entertainment info," "Get news"
- Social ties (8 types)
- Praise-Seeking Needs (4–20)
- Rejection Avoidance Needs (4–20)
- Information-Seeking Orientation (3–12)

ANALYSIS

Step 1: Ordinal Logistic Regression

→ *Proportional odds assumption violated* ($p < .001$)

Step 2: Binary Logistic Regression

→ DV recoded: Agree (1) vs. Disagree (0)

→ Separate models per age group

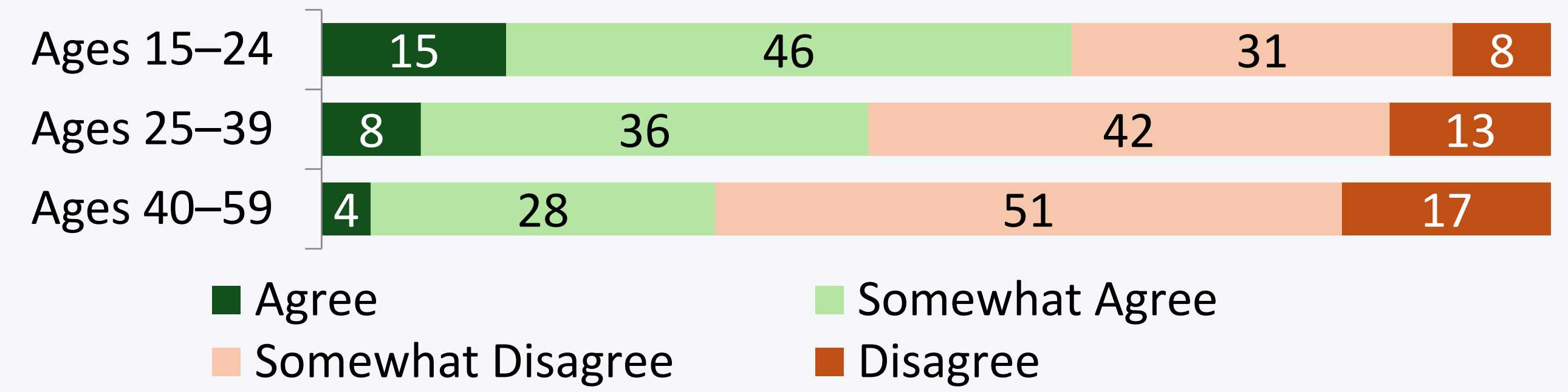
KEY REFERENCES

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RESULTS

1. Perceived Well-Being Trends

About 40% agree/somewhat agree that social media enhances well-being



2. Predictors of Perceived Well-Being

| Predictor | Ages 15–24 Exp(B) | Ages 25–39 Exp(B) | Ages 40–59 Exp(B) |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Gender (Female) | 1.05 | 1.35 * | 1.14 |
| Age | 0.95 | 0.98 | 1.00 |
| Subjective Well-Being | 1.05 | 1.06 * | 1.05 * |
| X Frequency | 1.10 | 1.16 ** | 1.07 |
| Instagram Frequency | 1.13 | 1.18 ** | 1.16 ** |
| Facebook Frequency | 0.91 | 1.23 ** | 1.11 |
| TikTok Frequency | 1.15 * | 1.17 ** | 1.18 *** |
| Usage Purpose: Interaction | 1.37 *** | 1.25 *** | 1.32 *** |
| Usage Purpose: Information | 0.87 | 0.95 | 1.08 |
| Tie: Close Friends | 0.83 | 1.22 | 0.96 |
| Tie: Distant Friends | 0.67* | 0.81 | 0.83 |
| Tie: Spouse / Partner | 0.58 | 0.71 * | 1.31 * |
| Tie: Family | 1.19 | 0.99 | 0.86 |
| Tie: Hobby Friends | 1.16 | 1.16 | 0.99 |
| Tie: Work Contacts | 1.73 | 1.23 | 0.79 |
| Tie: Online-Only Contacts | 0.92 | 1.16 | 0.96 |
| Tie: Online-to-Offline | 0.69 | 0.60* | 1.15 |
| Praise-Seeking Needs | 1.13 *** | 1.11 *** | 1.13 *** |
| Rejection Avoidance Needs | 1.02 | 1.03 | 1.07 *** |
| Information-Seeking Orientation | 1.14 * | 1.11 ** | 1.06 |
| Model Fit (Nagelkerke R ²) | .164 | .190 | .141 |

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Highlighted = significant in all age-stratified models

All models satisfied multicollinearity criteria (VIF < 5).

KEY FINDINGS

Universal Drivers (All Age Groups)

Social Interaction: Consistent positive predictor across age groups.

Praise-Seeking: Social approval predicts perceived well-being.

TikTok Frequency: Higher TikTok use is positively associated in all age groups.

| Age Group | Focus | Key Predictors |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Young Adults (15–24) | Utility | Information-seeking orientation; Most platform frequencies (except TikTok) are not significant. |
| Early Adults (25–39) | Platform Intensive / Gendered | High usage frequency (especially females) and Information-Seeking Orientation . |
| Middle-Aged (40–59) | Engagement | Platform frequency (Instagram/TikTok) and Rejection Avoidance . |

IMPLICATIONS

Perceived well-being from social media depends on the alignment between psychological needs and usage styles.

Interaction-oriented use and praise-seeking needs were consistent predictors across age groups.

Age pattern: information-seeking is more salient among younger users, whereas rejection-avoidance is more salient among middle-aged users.

Limitations: Cross-sectional design | Sample in Japan |

Self-report measures | Binary DV from 4-point scale