

Digital Intimacy in Indonesian Culture: An Analysis of Communication Motives and Confidentiality Patterns of Omi Dating App Users

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ABSTRACT

Dating apps are becoming increasingly popular on social media. The communication motives of online dating app users are diverse and dynamic, depending on personal needs, social conditions, and the flexible and anonymous nature of digital communication. While dating apps have long been considered ineffective as a medium for connecting married couples, reality has proven that these apps are the most common way for couples to meet while dating. As many as 12% of online dating users in the United States end up married or in a serious relationship. This study examined the Omi app as a representative of a serious app for finding a life partner. The research method employed a mixed-methods approach, combining interview data collection and document content analysis. The informants interviewed were 10 OMI dating app users, and content analysis of OMI users' personal stories was conducted over three months (January-March 2025). Qualitative data were analyzed using interactive analysis. The nine communication motives studied included seeking a sexual partner, seeking love, meeting new people, curiosity, ease of communication, emotional support, escape, anonymity, and social compensation integrated into communication practices. Relationships within the OMI app can develop into friendships, premarital relationships, or committed marriages. The motivation for seeking sexual partners stems from users initially seeking a physical relationship without commitment. Informants leverage OMI's speed of interaction and features, which allow for direct communication for casual needs. The OMI app also provides a more controlled and less stressful communication space. Users find comfort through supportive and empathetic conversations. Limited social access or problematic relationships in the real world have been resolved through the use of this app. The OMI app provides an alternative space to replace the void in social relationships with new connections that feel safer, more open, and less judgmental.

Keywords: dating app, Omi, sexual partner, premarital relationship, supportive

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays, communication devices such as mobile phones are widely owned by the public. It's incredibly easy to communicate and find information via *smartphones*. This fact illustrates the rapid development of information and communication technology devices today. Therefore, a country will be left behind if its people refuse to keep up with these technological developments, or if its government restricts the use of modern information and communication technology (Nuryanto Hery, 2012).

The world is currently shifting from the industrial era to the information era, which has given rise to an information *society*. The development of communication technology is currently occurring at an extremely rapid pace. This rapid technological development will impact people's lifestyles. Experts call it a communications revolution. This revolution in the field of communications is not only occurring in communication theory but also in communication technology. Technological developments in Indonesia are directly related to society. Youth, religious, and professional organizations, both related to public service and trade, are a very interesting topic. This ongoing issue has created a public discourse that remains unsolved (Yoga, 2019). Current technological developments are extraordinary, especially those related to telecommunications and information. This aims to facilitate and assist various aspects of human life, including work, activities, and even communication.

Current technological developments are moving towards new media, a term that still raises differences among scientists. The presence of new media, in all its forms and functions, of course, does not replace old media or traditional media that have existed so far, as seen in Rogers' classification of the era of communication technology development (in Novi Kurnia, 2005) it appears that the existence of new media has not displaced the existence of traditional media which until now is still needed by society to find sources of information that suit their respective characteristics.

According to a report from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia in 2024 is projected to reach 221,563,479 out of a total population of 278,696,200 in 2023. Based on gender, Indonesia's internet penetration is primarily driven by males (50.7%) and females (49.1%). The composition of internet users by age is shown in the following figure:

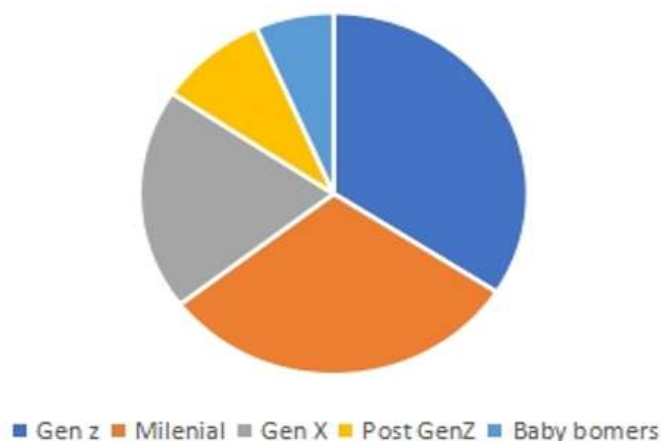


Figure 1: Diagram of internet users by age

Source: APPJI, 2024

Meanwhile, in terms of age, the largest number of internet users are from Gen Z (born in 1997-2012) at 34.40%, followed by internet users from the millennial generation (born in 1981-1996), then internet users from Gen X (born in 1965-1980), post Gen Z (born less than 2023), and the smallest are *baby boomers* (born in 1946-1964) at 6.58% (APJII, 2024). The current lifestyle of Indonesian society is highly dependent on information technology (Fridha & Octavianti, 2016). The digital world significantly influences every aspect of life, with *smartphones* becoming a primary need. The development of the internet has resulted in a wide variety of internet-connected applications. A wide variety of internet service applications can be utilized according to needs. A variety of applications can be easily downloaded via *smartphone* and are accessible to everyone. The *mobile application trend* is growing rapidly in Indonesia. Many applications can support and simplify daily activities. For example, the Google Maps *application* makes it easier to find locations. Application types can be distinguished according to the platform or operating system used (Nurdyana, Tutung et al. 2023).

The application is available on *smartphones* by downloading it through the default application from the cellphone, such as *Google Play Store* for Android, *App Store* for IOS. Internet service applications can be *web*, *mobile*, or *desktop*, such as *email* internet services that are used to send and receive electronic messages between email users around the world. This can make it easier for internet users to send messages in the form of text messages, voice messages, images, videos, or attached documents.

In the digital age, numerous social media apps have emerged, including *Facebook*, *WhatsApp*, *Instagram*, *Pinterest*, and others. Each has its unique function, such as *Pinterest*, which is widely used to find unique and *aesthetic image references*. A variety of dating apps are also available today. Matchmaking practices in the past and present differ significantly. In the past, matchmaking companies were prevalent in newspapers and magazines. In the 1970s, Yasco was the largest matchmaking company. Joining the group required a

substantial fee. With the rise of online dating apps, matchmaking services became increasingly sluggish and unpopular. Nowadays, with the advent of dating apps, *it's* easy to find a partner without spending a significant amount of money. Many people refer to matchmaking apps as online dating, where the relationship isn't just between two people but involves other people as well (Ade Fega Mei Lusi Ana & Sufyanto, 2023). Various matchmaking apps can be downloaded via *smartphone*.

One of the most talked-about dating sites is the Omi dating app. Omi has many competitors in the same matchmaking space as Tinder.



Figure 2: Tinder application on the Play Store

Source: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tinder&hl=id&gl=US>

Dating apps in Indonesia are viewed as taboo and negative, often labeled as one-night stands. Many Indonesians disapprove of matchmaking apps because they are online and rely solely on photos, text messages, and audio messages. Indonesian culture favors face - to -face meetings. in interacting with one another, especially in matchmaking (Paramitha et al., 2021).

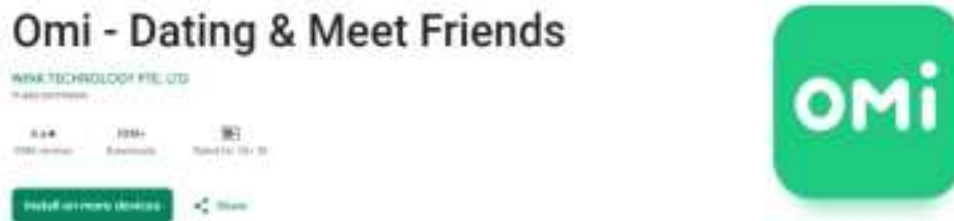


Figure 3: Omi app on the Play Store

Source: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=sg.omi>

Figure 3 shows that Omi is a less popular dating app. This can be seen from the number of people who have downloaded this application. Omi application users have reached 10 million+ on *the Play Store*. *The main purpose of the* Omi matchmaking application is to find friends and even partners. Omi is an application from Singapore, launched in Indonesia in 2018, which is designed for young people to make it easier to find friends or partners online without meeting in person. The Omi application is very easy to use by simply swiping right to like and left to dislike. This application can be accessed by registering using a telephone number or email. Omi has several unique features that are not found in other *online* dating applications, as explained in the following table.

App	Market Position	Core Strength	Target Segment
OMI	Serious Dating Specialist	Cultural adaptation + Psychology	Indonesian professionals seeking marriage
Tinder	Mass Market Leader	Brand recognition + User base	Young adults, casual to serious
Bumble	Female Empowerment	Women-first approach	Professional woman, relationship-minded

Challenge	Asian Social Discovery	Social features + Asian focus	Gen Z Asians, social exploration
OKCupid	Intellectual Matching	Algorithm sophistication	Educated, analytical daters

Table 1: Omi Positioning

Source: Application data documentation for the period January-March 2024

Omi has additional features that are not available in other applications, such as *telepath*, a feature that users can use to communicate *via call* without having to match each other, *Omi clic*, a feature that allows users to meet and get a partner based on zodiac compatibility. Omi clic can calculate compatibility with match partners using the sun, moon, and rising signs algorithm, a dating quiz, and a feature that presents a trivia question and matches users based on the answers. Finally, the love style test feature is a personality type test feature, which is a psychological test entitled types.

By providing answers to the questions given, it is hoped that you can find a suitable partner not only physically but also connected in terms of personality. In addition, there are also paid features, namely premium and supreme. The privilege of the premium feature by paying Rp. 25,000 / Week is to see who likes you, unlimited likes, 5 free *crushes/day*, punctuation, 1 free turbo/month, restore a partner, open who likes me, cancel unlimited actions, and premium icons. While the supreme or vip feature by paying Rp. 7,500 / week has privileges including seeing nearby users, unlimited advanced filters, 3 free compliments/day, daily choices, *inconigto mode*, 24-hour customer service, unlimited likes, 5 free *crushes/day*, punctuation, 1 free turbo/month, restore a partner, open what I like, cancel unlimited actions, and supreme icons.

Some other reasons that make Omi interesting to study include:

1. Integration of Psychological Features in Digital Dating

OMI is unique in integrating psychological aspects, specifically the MBTI matching system, into its digital dating mechanism. Research shows that 18.5% of all user complaints relate to MBTI matching issues, indicating that this feature is both a key differentiator and a source of new complexity in digital interactions. Research by Finkel et al. (2012) states that personality-based matching algorithms can improve long-term compatibility, but can also create unrealistic expectations of potential partners.

2. Blind Date Approach in the Context of Digital Security

Omi has adopted the concept of a digitized blind date. This system creates a unique dynamic between spontaneity and digital safety. Research shows that 16.2% of complaints relate to blind date anxiety, with 70% coming from female users who prioritize safety (80% of complaints about safety concerns). This reality reflects the challenge of creating a platform that encourages spontaneity while maintaining a sense of security, as Kaufmann & Peil (2020) found, identifying the tension between authenticity and safety as a fundamental paradox in modern dating apps.

Some Omi users claim to have downloaded this app with the motive of loneliness and seeking companionship. Many Omi app users also simply satisfy their lust. They invite people to boarding houses or lodgings under the pretext of chatting and getting closer. In addition, the Omi app has also been used by users to deceive and target victims for fraud. According to tribunnews.com (2024), a woman in Depok was the victim of fraud and embezzlement perpetrated by a man she met on the dating app. The perpetrator stole the victim's motorcycle and cellphone. Omi users learned about the app through friends and social media advertisements. Not all Omi users have had happy endings. Although dating apps offer convenience and wide access, they are considered less effective in forming long-term and meaningful relationships due to dishonest self-representation, a tendency to choose superficially, difficulty in building emotional connections, security risks, and relationships tend to be short and unstable (Hall, JA, et al, 2010). Putri et al (2023) stated that interpersonal communication that occurs in couples based on online dating applications can occur from how the approach process is carried

out by individuals in their interactions with their partners through the stages of communication they carry out. Meanwhile, Paramitha, Tanuwijaya, and Natakoesoemah (2021) pointed out that the main motives of paid application users are to find an ideal partner and find love, motives of curiosity and wanting to meet new people, motives to find a sexual partner, and ease of communication. Another motive is interest in paid features. Users are safer and more comfortable using paid features. Based on this background, researchers are interested in studying and analyzing communication motives among users of the Omi application, which is known as a serious application for finding a partner.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Motives for using media

Human behavior essentially has a specific motive for doing something. A person has an underlying motive or a desired goal. Motives are the "why" we communicate. Motives are often defined as needs, drives, desires, or impulses within a person. Motives stimulate and maintain activity and also determine the general direction of an individual's behavior (Weiner, B., 1992). Humans strive to convey messages because they have motives. However, some motives are conveyed consciously because they originate from the conscious mind and are proactive and relatively planned. Unconscious motives come from the subconscious and are reactive and relatively unplanned. Every human behavior has the potential for communication. However, not all human behavior will result in communication. Without motives, there would be no message to study (Salim Agus, 2023).

Various communication media have roles and functions, namely conveying messages. Each user has different motives for choosing their communication media. Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) found that a person's motives for using electronic media, such as the internet and social media, include:

- 1) Interpersonal utility motive
- 2) Pass Time Motif
- 3) Information-seeking motive
- 4) Convenience Motif
- 5) Entertainment Motif

According to Katz, Gurevitch, and Hass (West & Turner, 2008), 5 types of needs are motives for using media, namely:

- 1) Cognitive motives are an individual's need for information, knowledge, and understanding of something.
- 2) Affective motives, namely, motives related to emotions, pleasant feelings, and aesthetics.
- 3) Personal integration motives are motives to increase credibility and integrity, self-confidence, and status.
- 4) Social integration motive is a motive to improve close relationships with family, friends, and those closest to us.
- 5) The motive for releasing tension is a motive to divert or as a momentary escape from the real world.

Wang and Chang's research (in Paramitha et al., 2010) states that there are nine individual motives for establishing a relationship through cyberspace: seeking love, seeking a sexual partner, emotional support, curiosity, escape, anonymity, the opportunity to meet new people, ease of communication, and social compensation. This study focuses on nine individual motives for establishing a relationship through cyberspace :

- a. Motives for seeking sexual partners

There are motives where users simply want to find a friend or a one-night stand. Many online dating apps are abused by certain sexual predators as a means to perpetrate their crimes.

1) Motives for seeking sexual partners

This motive is in line with the mission of the dating application, namely, finding a partner for a marriage commitment.

2) Motive for looking for love

In keeping with the Omi app's stated purpose, which is to find a partner, many couples have successfully married and found happiness after meeting on online dating apps.

3) Motive of opportunity to meet new people

Everyone can easily form new relationships online. Indonesians generally enjoy socializing and gathering, finding friends and connections. This makes the Omi app a popular platform for meeting new people.

4) Curiosity Motive

Curiosity is an internal drive that drives someone to seek new knowledge or experiences because they feel interested in something. This curiosity about the online dating app Omi is particularly strong.

5) Motive of Convenience in Communication

Online communication can help alleviate awkwardness. For some people, face-to-face communication can lead to feelings of anxiety and a lack of confidence.

6) Emotional Support

Emotional support is a positive form given to make someone more enthusiastic and motivated in achieving a desire and being able to face a problem.

7) Diversion Motive

The motive for escape is the motive for freeing oneself from routine and boredom.

8) Anonymity Motive

The purpose of anonymity is to conceal identity. While anonymity offers users the advantage of hiding their identity and maintaining the security of their data, many people exploit it for criminal activity and abuse, particularly on the internet.

9) Social Compensation Motive

The social compensation motive is the drive to seek social relationships or interactions to fill the void or deficiencies in other aspects of one's life.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods with a descriptive design. Descriptive research aims to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the phenomena under investigation, including their characteristics and relationships (Nazir, 1988). This study aims to describe the communication motives of users of the Omi online dating application. Quantitative content analysis is a research method used to identify and measure specific frequencies or patterns in text or other media by numerically coding and counting communication elements to uncover existing relationships or trends (Neuendorf, K.A., 2017). The basic procedure for conducting this content analysis study involved six stages:

- (1) Formulating the research question: How high is the motivation level of OMI app users?
- (2) Sampling, namely by determining chat data on the OMI app over three months (January-March 2025).
- (3) Creating categories for analysis: calculating emerging discussion topics related to user motivations during January-March 2025.
- (4) Data collection of selected document samples and coding.
- (5) Creating scales and items based on specific criteria for data collection, namely by calculating percentages.
- (6) Interpreting the data obtained.

Coding involved intercoders and intracoders, namely external and internal coding, using the formula:

$$CR = \frac{2M}{N1+N2}$$

Where CR = reliability coefficient, M = statements agreed upon by coder 1 and coder 2, and N1+N2 = number of statements coded by coder. The quantitative data taken from the application OMI for 3 months (January-March 2025)

In selecting the research sample, the researcher employed purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2009), purposive sampling is the selection of data sources that meet specific criteria or characteristics, as the informants selected are considered the most knowledgeable about the research topic. The informant criteria in this study are:

- a. Omi app users must be active for at least 6 months
- b. Aged 20-30 years

In this study, the data collection techniques used were interviews and documentation.

The interview process was conducted using two techniques: offline and online interviews. Offline interviews involved meeting informants directly, while online interviews involved using WhatsApp chat and the Omi app's chat feature. Through these interviews, researchers will explore the communication motives of Omi online dating app users. Documentation is a data collection technique that involves seeking evidence from non-human sources related to the object under study, such as writings, images, or monumental works of a person (Sugiarto, 2015). This study will include documents in the form of photographs and files from the Omi app, websites, and links that can support this research. Data analysis techniques in this study were conducted interactively using the Miles and Huberman model through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusions.

The validity of this research data was tested using data source triangulation. According to Sugiyono (2019), Data source triangulation is a data collection technique that combines various existing data sources. Each data source will produce different evidence or data, which will then provide a different perspective on the phenomenon being studied. In quantitative content analysis, data were collected using documentation methods, namely, dating chat data on the Omi app over three months (January-March 2025). Data were analyzed based on the percentage trends emerging from each recorded topic and correlated with the trends in the qualitative data.

Informant Profile

AA

Informant AA is 26 years old and lives in Bantul, Yogyakarta. He is a man working in the private sector in

Yogyakarta and has been using the online dating app Omi since 2020, right at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. His use of the app began out of curiosity and recommendations from friends who said Omi was an interesting app for finding friends and casual conversation. However, over time, R1 began to see the app's potential for finding dates and developing more serious relationships. AA's status is single, and he is open to getting to know other users better through this app. In his personal experience, he once had a relationship with someone he met at Omi, and they were able to talk openly about each other's feelings and past.

BB

Informant BB is 23 years old and lives in Bantul, Yogyakarta. He is a student studying civil engineering. He started using the OMI app in 2023, inspired by conversations he heard on social media, particularly on Instagram, promoting the app. Initially, he used OMI to find new friends and share experiences with people who shared his interests and hobbies. For him, the app is more of a means to make friends without the pressure of finding a romantic partner or a serious relationship. He believes that although OMI, while often associated with finding a partner or dating, this app still allows users the flexibility to pursue more casual goals, such as finding friends. Users can utilize the app's features to meet and communicate with new people without having to rush into a deeper relationship.

CC

Informant CC is 24 years old and originally from Makassar, although he currently lives in Yogyakarta. He works as a barista and has been actively using the Omi app since 2023. Initially, CC was interested in trying this app out of curiosity that arose after hearing many stories from his friends about their experiences on Omi. His initial goal in using this app was to find fun and more relaxed dates without heavy expectations, and to be able to talk to less tense people, so that conversations could be freer and enjoyable. CC considers O mi more focused on finding dates than on other goals, such as friendship. CC admitted to looking for love, mainly because he felt he didn't have many female friends who could understand him and share his views.

DD

Informant DD is 27 years old and comes from Bandung. He works in the private sector and started using the Omi app in January 2024. His main goal was to find new friends, especially those who shared his interests, such as playing Mobile Legends and fishing. He felt that in the real world, he rarely met people who shared his hobbies, so Omi became the perfect platform for finding friends with similar interests. Although some people started chatting with him to find a partner or a date, he remained focused on finding friends first.

EE

Informant EE is 23 years old and lives in Bantul, Yogyakarta. He is a Public Administration student. She started using the Omi app in 2023, inspired by curiosity and a desire to find friends who shared her interests, particularly watching Korean dramas and reading webtoons. EE saw Omi as a great place to meet like-minded people and hoped to build deeper friendships. She realized that many people were using Omi. Aims to find a partner or romantic relationship, but he is more focused on finding friends who have similar hobbies.

FF

Informant FF is 26 years old and lives in Sleman, Yogyakarta. He works in the private sector and has a bachelor's degree in Management. FF started using the OMI app in June 2024 after feeling that his real-life relationships often weren't serious and ended abruptly. He felt that dating apps could be a more practical way to find a more suitable and serious partner. As an extrovert, he felt that his busy work schedule limited his time to meet new people in person, making Omi the right choice for expanding his network and finding a more serious partner. Through Omi, he could focus more on finding a partner who was compatible with him without having to waste a lot of time.

GG

GG is a 24-year-old woman residing in Yogyakarta. Since December 2024, she has been actively using the Omi app to expand her social network and find dates. As a factory worker, she faces a busy routine and a limited circle of friends, making Omi one of her solutions for interacting with new people. GG's background as a factory worker indicates that she belongs to the productive age group with a high social need, especially amidst the busyness of work. Her rather monotonous activities in the factory environment have led her to use Omi as a means of entertainment and an escape from the boredom of everyday life. As a new user, she is motivated to explore Omi's features, both to simply fill her free time and to find opportunities to meet people with similar interests.

HH

HH is a 28-year-old woman living in Bantul, Yogyakarta Special Region. Since January 2024, she has been actively using the Omi app to expand her social network and explore new relationships. Working as a barista at a trendy cafe, she has a dynamic social circle, but her interactions with customers are often limited to brief encounters. As a young barista, HH spent most of his time behind the coffee machine, serving customers of all kinds. This job allowed him to meet many people, but his professional nature made it difficult to build more personal relationships. Omi emerged as a solution to fill this social void, giving him a space to interact outside of the work context.

II

II, a 30-year-old woman from Magelang, is an interesting example of a working mother using the Omi app. As a private employee and mother of one, her life is filled with a busy routine between work and household responsibilities. Over the past two years, since March 2023, Omi has become a kind of "social lifeline" for her, amidst limited time for conventional socializing. Unlike most users who are looking for a date, she utilizes Omi in a unique and measured way. She uses the app primarily to connect with fellow working mothers through dedicated discussion groups, such as "Working Mothers," her favorite virtual community. On the Omi app, she can share experiences about the challenges of balancing career and family without fear of judgment.

JJ

JJ, a 27-year-old man from Klaten, is an interesting representative of the Omi app users among young workers in small towns. As a private employee at a logistics company, his daily life is filled with a monotonous work routine from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Since May 2024, Omi has become his window to a more colorful social world outside the limited work circle. Unlike the stereotype of dating app users, JJ uses Omi with a relaxed and fluid approach. For young people who are away from home, this app serves as a means of entertainment and expanding their network of friends. "Instead of daydreaming alone in my boarding house, it's better to swipe on Omi while listening to music," he said in a thick Javanese accent. He proved that friendship apps are not only popular among metropolitan communities but also among young people in rural areas who are hungry for more meaningful social interactions.

Quantitative data

Based on quantitative data taken from the application for 3 months (January-March 2025), the main motives of Omi followers were revealed, including :

1. Looking for a serious partner as a potential husband/wife (28%): 12,600 followers
2. Networking & looking for friends (21 %): 9,450 followers
3. Casual Dating (18 %): 8,100 followers
4. Couples ' cultural exploration (13%): 5,850 followers
5. Learn your partner's language as much as (9%): 4,050 followers
6. Travel Partner (7%): 3,150 followers
7. Business Connection as much as (4%): 1,800 followers

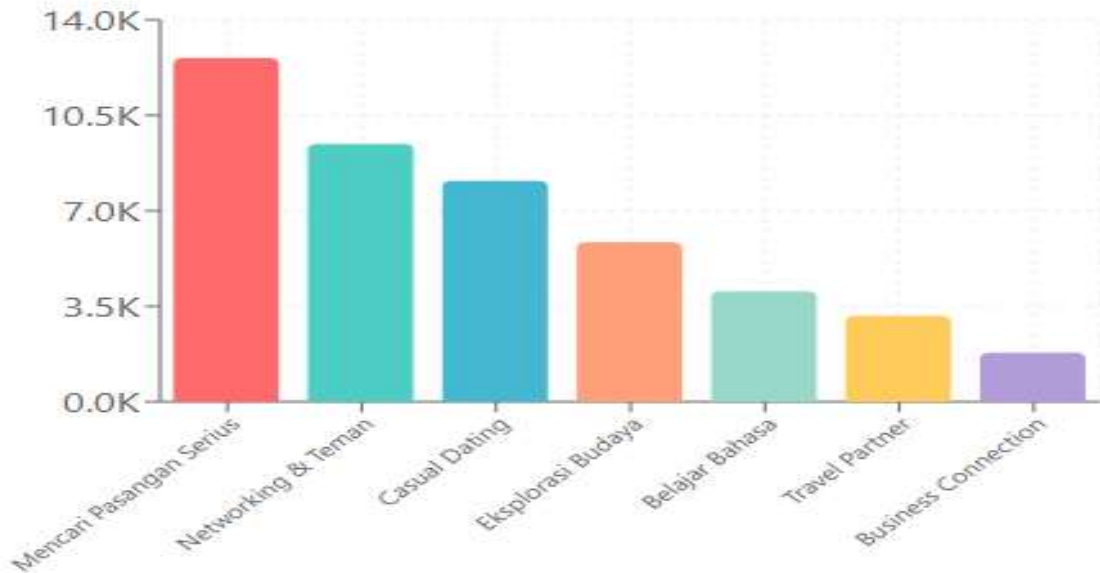


Figure 4: Quantitative data of Omi user motives

Source: researcher documentation, 2025

The topics of discussion they agreed on can be seen in the graph below:

1. MBTI Matching Issues as many as (18.5%), namely discussing problems with the personality matching with a partner.
2. Blind Date Anxiety (16.2 %), the conversation revolved around anxiety related to the Omi blind date system.
3. Profile Verification Problems (14.4%), in the form of topics about profile verification constraints.
4. Cultural Differences as much as (12.8%), with the topic of cultural differences between users.
5. Language Barriers as much as (11.2%) regarding language barriers with couples of different ethnicities
6. Safety Concerns, as many as (9.8%) are about security concerns.

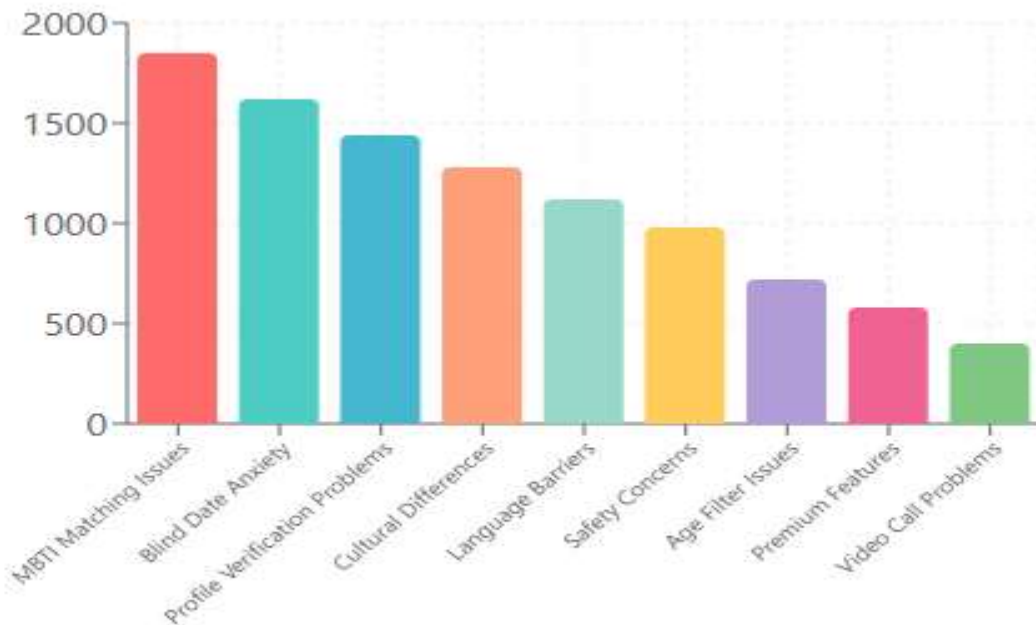


Figure 5: Quantitative data on topics of sharing on Omi

Source: Researcher documentation, 2025

Sharabi (2021) confirmed the existence of a "placebo effect" in online dating, where users' positive expectations of compatibility predict better first dates, regardless of their belief in the algorithm's reliability. This suggests that users have high expectations of the matching algorithm, leading to disappointment and complaints when it doesn't meet their expectations. The study found that the touted matching algorithm was only slightly better than random chance at matching people. The gap between high user expectations and reality suggests the algorithm isn't as effective as advertised, making this a major user complaint. This was experienced by informants AA and CC, who found partners through Omi.

Research data shows that nearly 30% of engaged couples met through dating apps. This suggests that dating apps have become a popular strategy for meeting potential life partners. According to The Knot (2021), in its Jewelry and Engagement Study, dating apps are currently the most common way for engaged couples to meet. 12% of online daters in the United States eventually marry or enter into a serious relationship with someone they met through an online dating site. This data suggests that while not all dating app users successfully marry, a significant percentage achieve long-term commitment.

According to a study, nearly 50% of couples today meet online through dating apps and websites. Among coupled adults who have tried online dating, 40% met their current spouse or partner there. Interestingly, approximately 5.96% of marriages that began online ended in separation or divorce at the time of the survey, compared to 7.67% among couples who met offline. This data suggests that relationships that begin through online dating have a higher level of stability.

Qualitative Data

The table below shows quantitative data obtained from interviews with informants regarding motives for using Omi.

No	Motive	Informant Statements
1	Looking for a sexual partner	Includes casual friends, serious dating, physical exploration, and sexual redirection in conversation.
2	Looking for love	Emotional connection, partner filtering features, shared interests, and long-term relationship orientation.
3	Opportunity to meet new people	Expanding networks, meeting similar interests, and a safe interaction space.
4	Curiosity	Interest in dating platforms, app promotions, digital interaction, and community features.
5	Ease of communication	Open talk without pressure, flexible intensity, stigma-free interaction.
6	Emotional support	Empathy, encouragement, stress relief, and being listened to.
7	Escape	Relief from routine, boredom, work pressure, loneliness.
8	Anonymity	Identity protection, safe self-disclosure, controlled interaction depth.
9	Social compensation	Fulfilling emotional void, substitute social interaction, recognition, and appreciation.

Table 2: Informant Statements

Source: Results of interviews with informants 2024

DISCUSSION

Schultheiss (2021) states that motives are ingrained drives within an individual, serving as a driving force to achieve specific goals. These drives, whether innate or the result of learned experiences, play a role in shaping the desires, needs, or wants that motivate a person's actions, particularly when using media such as dating apps. Users can interpret their own and others' motives, which influences their engagement and satisfaction with an app (Franzese, 2012). An individual's level of motivational reactivity influences their behavior when using dating apps. Individuals with low defensive motivational reactivity and high appreciative motivational reactivity tend to be quicker in browsing other people's profiles and making decisions (Cumming & Mays, 2021). Each communication motive essentially has different characteristics, depending on the purpose of use. Below, the author outlines the analysis of the interview results with the findings of this study.

1. Motives for Seeking a Sexual Partner

The motive of "finding a sexual partner" emerged as one of the dominant motives for using the Omi app by some informants. While the app was initially accessed to find friends or socialize, in practice, it tends to create a communication ecosystem that leads to casual, even sexual, dating, with varying intensity among users. This finding is relevant to the grafting theory that underpins much research on dating apps. This theory suggests that users engage with dating apps to fulfill specific needs, such as finding a sexual partner. This theory helps explain the diverse motives behind app use, including social interaction, sexual satisfaction, and relationship building (Cruz et al., 2023).

Several informants, such as AA, CC, and GG, explicitly stated that their use of the Omi app evolved into a means of finding dates with or without serious commitment. AA admitted that although initially just "trying it out," the dynamics of the conversations and the responses of other users encouraged her to start opening up to the possibility of seeking light physical and emotional relationships. Similarly, CC, who was interested in casual relationships from the start, saw Omi as a space for free interaction without relational pressure. Meanwhile, GG saw Omi as a platform that was "designed for quick relationships," where users openly indicated their intention to meet or date briefly. This statement is supported by research by Vera Cruz et al., (2024) Many online dating app users are motivated by seeking casual sex, with men more likely to use the app for short-term sexual encounters than women.

This phenomenon arises not only from personal intentions but is also supported by the structure of the app's features. For example, informants like HH consider the "Swipe," "Instant Match," or "Virtual Dating" features to be indicators that Omi is indeed directing communication toward a quick, potentially physical, personal relationship. He is not directly interested in a sexual relationship, acknowledging that cultural pressures within the app force him to adjust communication expectations while still setting boundaries for interaction. This aligns with Ana & Sufyanto's research. (2023) who stated that the use of dating apps for non-committal relationships is part of a larger cultural shift towards more flexible and varied relationship structures.

BB, DD, and EE highlight the predominance of users seeking sexual relationships, even though they lack such motives. They are a minority group more focused on finding friends or shared interests, yet experience contact that is directed toward more intimate conversations. This phenomenon demonstrates a conflict of communication expectations, where nonsexual users are still affected by the sexual atmosphere of communication within the app.

Meanwhile, FF and JJ offer interesting perspectives on the transition of communication intentions. FF initially sought a serious partner but realized that the app's dynamics often led to more physical communication. While JJ sought an emotional partner, she didn't rule out a "fluid" or casual relationship, depending on compatibility. This suggests that the boundaries between sexual and romantic communication can become blurred, depending on how interactions develop within the platform. Meanwhile, FF demonstrated how dominant norms can still impact users who aren't seeking a sexual relationship. Despite stating her marital status, she once received inappropriate advances from other users. This highlights the importance of negotiating identity and communication boundaries, as well as women's vulnerability to sexual advances in permissive digital spaces (Prihantoro et al., 2020).

2. Motive for Looking for Love

Based on interviews with 10 informants, it appears that the communication process in finding love on Omi follows three main patterns: utilizing app features to selectively screen potential partners, building reflective and open communication about life values, and gradual emotional exploration. Users generally utilize bio features, location filters, religion, and interests to align preferences with the goal of a more serious relationship. They tend to maintain the quality of communication by emphasizing value compatibility and clarity of intentions from the outset. This is consistent with research by Hasna et al. (2023), which shows that dating apps provide users with tools to select potential partners based on specific criteria relevant to their values and life goals.

Reflective and open communication patterns are crucial in this process. Research shows that when users openly share life values and goals, this contributes to increased trust and deepening interpersonal relationships (Sunjaya et al., 2022). Users focus not only on physical aspects but also engage in deeper emotional exploration, which helps build a strong foundation for long-term relationships. The goal of building long-term relationships is evident in how users screen and test partner compatibility through intense conversations (Nadine & Ramadhana, 2021).

Previous research has shown that gradual emotional exploration is an effective strategy for users in examining relationship dynamics. Omi users demonstrate a tendency to prioritize deeper communication, involving the gradual exchange of feelings and personal experiences that foster emotional closeness (Sunjaya et al., 2022). Some users use the app as a safe platform to express relational needs and receive affirmation for their desire for a stable relationship.

3. Motive of Chance to Meet New People

The communication motive to meet new people emerged strongly in the narratives of almost all informants, especially those who felt that daily routines limited direct social interaction. This motive falls under the category of interpersonal communication motives involving pleasure, affection, and inclusion. These motives are often driven by a desire for social interaction unfulfilled by routine activities (Astuti et al., 2019). Informants stated that Omi facilitates meeting people from various backgrounds who were previously impossible to reach through conventional social networks. Some users who live in closed work environments or have become migrants, such as J J and HH, use Omi as a medium to build local relationships and fill the social void in their new environment. This finding is relevant to Ngiso & Goa, (2023), who stated that informants who are isolated in their work environments or who have become migrants use Omi to build local relationships, indicating that this application serves as a bridge to overcome social voids. FF and GG even mentioned that the intensity of their work makes them have no time for real socializing, making the application a practical and spontaneous alternative for establishing light communication.

The communication model built on this theme is open but without the expectation of long-term relationships. Users like EE, DD, and BB utilize features like interest and hobby preferences to reach out to other relevant users, not for romance or sexual relationships, but rather for enjoyable and egalitarian social interactions. The overall impression from all informants suggests that Omi is optimized for flexibly expanding social connections, facilitating the need for "chat buddies," "interest buddies," or simply casual relationships that add color to their digital social lives.

4. Curiosity Motive

Curiosity is the starting point for interaction for many Omi users, who utilize the app not for deep relational needs, but rather as an exploration of the unfamiliar and exciting world of digital communication. Informants who identified this motive demonstrated a pattern of communication that began without expectations. They simply wanted to know how the app system worked, how other users would respond, and what conversational dynamics might occur within this online platform. Curiosity drove users to try out various features like swipe, bio, auto-match, and instant chat, to explore without commitment. The resulting communication was

experimental, with users seeking not only relational needs but also social validation and entertainment from the social exploration process (Rico et al., 2024).

International studies report curiosity as one of the main motives for using dating apps, alongside other motives such as entertainment and social interaction (Vera Cruz et al., 2024). User experiences within the Omi app also demonstrate a pattern of spontaneous testing and selection driven by curiosity. Users tend to observe other users' responses to their interactions and adjust accordingly to achieve the desired communication outcome. Some users use initial conversations simply to "see responses," "figure out character," or even "curious about who will be interested in me." This motivation drives them to download dating apps and create profiles by including photos and information such as interests (Meiliani & Fuady, 2023). The curiosity motive extends beyond the app as technology, but also to a curiosity about digital social responses, allowing the app to be used as a testing ground for interactions, specifically how they are perceived, selected, or ignored.

5. Motive of Ease of Communication

Informants described conversations through the app as providing a space to express themselves without social pressures such as embarrassment, fear of rejection, or judgment. Users utilize Omi as a communication space that does not require immediate emotional readiness, as they can more calmly compose messages, choose their words, or even stop communication at any time without guilt. For some users who tend to be introverted or have social anxiety, Omi provides a tool for building connections gradually and safely, as it does not present the risks of spontaneous and expectation-filled face-to-face communication. This finding aligns with hyperpersonal communication theory, which emphasizes that online communication conditions allow individuals to construct a more attractive and managed self-image, as they have the opportunity to edit messages and choose response times.

Ease of communication isn't just about technicalities like "auto-match" or "instant chat" features, but rather about a sense of control in building relationships. Interactions also don't require a high level of social capital; users simply create an engaging profile and then wait or initiate low-intensity conversations. This creates a low-pressure communication space that still opens up opportunities for intimacy. The need for safe, free, and controlled expression is at the heart of this motive, ultimately driving social engagement with adjustable intensity and direction (Arias & Punyanunt-Carter, 2023). A communication environment free from hurtful social evaluation can stimulate higher participation and build significant bonds, in line with research on the relationship between offline communication and social satisfaction (Hall et al., 2023).

6. Motives for Emotional Support

The Omi app functions not only to find a partner or conversation partner, but also as a medium for emotional venting, allowing users to feel heard and understood without the risk of judgment. The communication they build tends to focus on comfort and empathy, with users preferring supportive, open, and responsive partners when facing stress, relationship conflict, or the pressures of everyday life. Based on the Interpersonal Communication Motives framework, the need for affection and inclusion can drive the use of dating platforms. One study highlights the social compensation hypothesis, where individuals with psychological vulnerabilities (e.g., loneliness, anxiety) tend to turn to online dating for emotional comfort and interactions that make them feel connected (Toma, 2022).

Several informants reported feeling psychologically better after chatting with other users who were able to show sympathy, offer advice, or even simply provide companionship through light conversation. The coherence between motives and communication processes can be seen in how users choose who they interact with, the duration and intensity of conversations, and the types of topics discussed. Users seeking emotional support tend to limit themselves to individuals who demonstrate empathy from the outset and maintain a positive and reassuring tone. Some users even describe the presence of virtual friends on Omi as a "relief" or "lifting of burdens," indicating that the relationships they build, even if they are only physically present, still have a real psychosocial impact.

7. Diversion Motive

The motive of diversion emerged in the narratives of users who used Omi as a form of escapism from real-life pressures such as work stress, relationship conflict, loneliness, and monotonous routines. Research suggests that individuals seek ways to distract themselves from personal problems, and Omi serves as an "escape space" that offers lighter, less demanding interactions than conventional social media (Christopher & Satiadarma, 2024). There is no obligation to maintain ongoing relationships, no social pressure to appear perfect, and users are free to exit the conversation whenever they feel uncomfortable. This pattern suggests that communication in escapism motives is temporary but has a significant psychological impact, particularly in providing a sense of freedom and emotional breathing space. This aligns with previous research that suggests more relaxed and informal interpersonal communication can reduce anxiety levels and increase user satisfaction. Functionally, the escapism motive in Omi use aligns with aspects of escapism and emotional diversion, where media is used to distract from situations that cause stress or anxiety. This motive is also related to the theory of coping communication, namely, the communication process carried out by individuals in response to psychosocial stress to reduce emotional burden (Arias & Punyanunt Carter, 2023; Purnawati & Kurniawati, 2023) .

8. Anonymity Motive

The anonymity of Omi encourages users to communicate more freely on the Omi app because their identities are not immediately known to the other person. Users feel comfortable controlling the information they share, including personal backgrounds, relationship status, and emotional states. Omi provides a safe communication space for self-disclosure without fear of social judgment, especially for individuals who often feel monitored or restricted by social norms and expectations in real life. This anonymity encourages individuals to share personal information they might not disclose on other platforms, such as emotional complaints, ideas, or life experiences, more openly (Perbawani & Anshari, 2018) . This space allows users to engage in interpersonal communication without forming attachments too quickly, resulting in more fluid, flexible, and less emotionally burdensome relationships (Toma, 2022) .

Anonymous communication encourages more authentic self-expression, while remaining within the user's control. Informants who prioritize this motive tend to share life complaints, feelings, or ideas they might not express on other platforms. Others. Users also feel safer ending interactions they deem uncomfortable or selectively changing their identities without immediate consequences. Anonymity serves not only as a form of protection but also as a tool for emotional and social regulation, allowing users to limit or open connections at their own pace (Olaf et al., 2024) . This communication pattern often makes relationships on Omi short-lived but meaningful, as the pursuit isn't about permanence, but rather freedom of expression in a neutral digital space. This motive is closely related to *the Online Disinhibition Effect* in online communication theory, a phenomenon where individuals feel more confident expressing themselves due to social distance and reduced identity expectations (Maharani & Manalu, 2017; Vera Cruz et al., 2024) .

9. Social Compensation Motive

The social compensation motive arises from users' need to fill the relationship void or the limited social interactions they experience in real life. Users who feel lonely, isolated, or lack support from their surroundings utilize Omi as a supplementary medium or substitute for lost interpersonal relationships. The communication that develops within this motive generally takes place in a supportive emotional environment, with users seeking comfort, acceptance, or even self-validation from those they meet online. Relationship or attachment issues within family or friends can lead to loneliness, and individuals seek comfort or desired connections through dating apps as compensation (Christopher & Satiadarma, 2024).

Research indicates that communication anxiety can drive individuals to seek more intensive interactions on social media, which in turn can contribute to their engagement in compensatory forms of social communication (Kamarudin et al., 2020). Communication within this motive tends to exhibit more personal yet measured engagement patterns. Users seek to build emotional connections with others, perceived as replacing the relationships they lack at work, home, or in everyday social settings.

Some informants even felt self-validated through compliments, positive greetings, or lighthearted conversations that alleviated the psychological stress of demanding social roles, such as being a migrant, a working mother, or someone living alone. Omi became an alternative social space where users could feel accepted, empowered, and connected without having to meet the social expectations of real-world relationships. This motive is closely related to the Social Compensation Hypothesis, which states that individuals with limited social relationships or low self-esteem will use digital media to replace or patch up these deficiencies in real life (Sheldon et al., 2021) . The following is a model of Omi dating app user motivations, demonstrating the different dynamics among the research informants. The following figure illustrates the model of informants' communication motives for using dating apps and their communication effects:

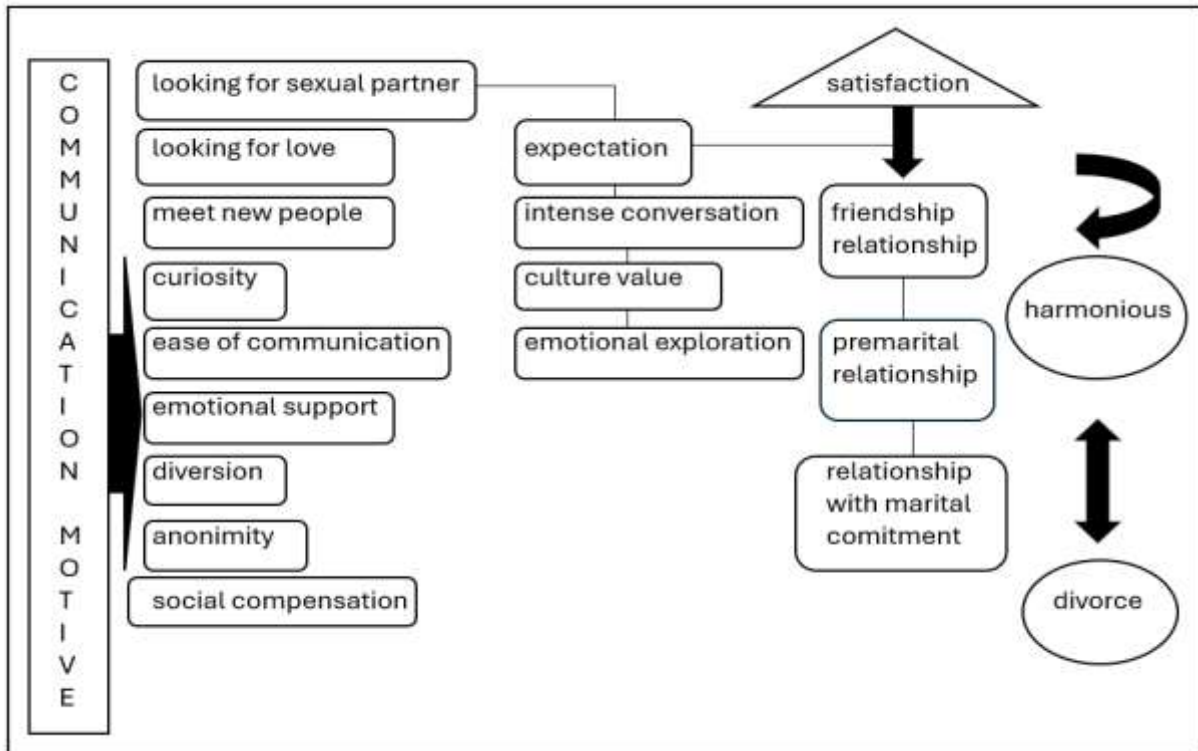


Figure 1: Omi users' communication motives

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the communication motives of Omi online dating app users are highly diverse and dynamic, influenced by personal needs, social conditions, and the flexible and anonymous characteristics of digital communication. The nine motives studied are seeking a sexual partner, seeking love, meeting new people, curiosity, ease of communication, emotional support, escape, anonymity, and social compensation integrated into communication practices that are not singular, but often intersect and evolve along with the intensity of Omi use, expectations, cultural value alignment, and emotional exploration. The development of relationships can reach friendships, premarital relationships, or relationships with a committed marriage.

The motive for seeking sexual partners stems from users initially seeking a physical relationship without commitment. Informants utilize the speed of interaction and Omi's features, which allow for direct communication, for casual needs. Conversely, the motive for seeking love is driven by the desire for a meaningful, long-term relationship. Users with this motive utilize the filtering features and in-depth bios as a means of building emotional connections that align with their values and life vision. Meanwhile, many Omi users use it as a means of meeting new people, expanding their social network, and avoiding loneliness, without explicit romantic expectations. This motive often stems from curiosity, especially in the initial stages

of app use. Users want to explore the system, features, and social possibilities offered by Omi without any specific relational motives.

Ease of communication is also an important motive, especially for individuals with limited time or awkwardness in face-to-face interactions. The Omi app provides a more controlled and less stressful communication space. Furthermore, emotional support is a necessity for users facing stress, relationship conflict, or loneliness. They find comfort through supportive and empathetic conversations with other users. The motive of escape has been identified among users seeking distraction from the pressures of life. Omi serves as both a medium for entertainment and emotional relief. The anonymity offered by Omi provides users with the security to express themselves, maintain privacy, and avoid stigma. Users can control their identity and exit interactions without social consequences. Finally, social compensation is a highly meaningful motive for users with limited social access or troubled relationships in the real world. The Omi app provides an alternative space to replace the void in social relationships with new connections that feel safer, more open, and less judgmental.

SUGGESTION

Based on the presentation of this research, the author provides suggestions to several parties, including:

Dating App Users

Users are advised to understand and be aware of their personal communication motives before deciding to use a dating app like Omi. Motives that don't align with other users' expectations can create discomfort or even potential communication conflict. Users also need to equip themselves with digital literacy and communication etiquette on online platforms to avoid getting caught in manipulative, exploitative, or emotionally risky relationships.

Further Research

This research can serve as a basis for developing further quantitative studies to examine the relationship between communication motives and the resulting relationships, including the duration, sustainability, and emotional quality. Future researchers could also explore differences in motives based on age, gender, relationship status, or cultural background.

Application Development Agency

The results of this study can be used as considerations in designing more inclusive and safe features, such as communication filters based on relationship goals, effective reporting systems, and community spaces that encourage healthy communication. Meanwhile, for governments and institutions working in digital literacy and consumer protection, it is crucial to develop educational and regulatory policies regarding the use of dating apps, particularly regarding personal data protection, preventing online sexual exploitation, and promoting ethical communication on digital platforms.

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