

## Social networking personality of adolescents and how it differs from their personality characteristics

Akshyata Ray<sup>1\*</sup>, Mrs Shivi Pathak<sup>2</sup>, Shubham Sharma<sup>3</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Social media is used for variety of activities, including sharing information, interacting with peers and developing a coherent identity. Adolescents currently are growing up with new media, intertwining these in their daily lives. Identity development is a main task for adolescents and media provides possibilities for self-presentation. In this research, we examine, how aspects of online self-presentation are influenced by adolescents' personality characteristics.

**Keywords:** *Social Media, Adolescents, Social Networking Personality, Personality*

Adolescents use social media for self-presentation through the ways they choose to represent themselves online by posting pictures, status updates and sharing aspects of their lives. According to a national survey, almost 98% adolescents report going online daily, of these 24% go online almost constantly and 56% go online for several times a day. Adolescents themselves describe these platforms as a key tool for connecting and maintaining relationship being creative and learning more about the world.

Adolescents use social media for impression management by attempting to use these media to control other people's perceptions of who they are and how they act. Such self-exploration can help youth to discover aspects of themselves, one study found that adolescents who communicated more online had greater self-concept clarity, which is the ability to understand who one clearly and stably.

The preponderance of adolescents has access to and engage in use of Social networking sites. Based on relatively recent data, although perhaps presently an underestimate, 73% use social networking sites (Lenhart, 2009; Lenhart, 2012; Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010). Late adolescents and emerging adults average approximately 30 minutes per day just on Facebook alone (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009).

<sup>1</sup>Doon University, Dehradun, India

<sup>2</sup>Doon University, Dehradun, India

<sup>3</sup>Doon University, Dehradun, India

\*Responding Author

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Self-presentation is the way we modify, create, or maintain an impression of ourselves, attempting to lead people to think of us in a particular way (Brown, 1997).

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Sample*

In order to collect data for the present research, secondary schools and colleges were selected through stratified random sampling techniques. Again, 50 students of different age group (16-25 age) will be taken randomly as the subjects of the present investigation from the selected schools and colleges.

#### *Instruments*

Two measures were used in this study,

##### **1. Self-structured questionnaire**

**2. Cattell's 16 PF:** In 1949, Raymond Cattell published the first edition of the 16PF. It was a revolutionary concept that measured the whole of human personality using a structure discovered through factor analysis. The 16PF Fifth Edition contains 185 items that comprise the 16 primaries personality factor scales as well as an Impression Management Index (III), which assess social desirability. Each scale contains 10 to 15 items. The latest edition represents a controlled, natural evolution of the 16PF that continues to assess the 16 personality factors and measures levels of warmth, reasoning, emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, rule-consciousness, social boldness, sensitivity, vigilance, abstractedness, privacy, self-reliance, perfectionism and tension. The 16PF Fifth Edition also includes five global factors: extroversion, anxiety, tough-mindedness, independence, and self-control.

#### *Reliability and Validity of 16 PF:*

Moderate to good reliability rating have been reported for the 16PF. Based on a sample of 10,261 individuals, internal consistency reliabilities are on average 0.76 for the primary scales and a range of 0.68 to 0.87 for all 16 scales. The test-reliabilities over a 2-week period showed scores of 0.69-0.87 for all scales and a 2-month interval showed scores ranging from 0.56-0.79. This data can be found and supported in the 16PF Fifth Edition Technical Manual by Conn & Rieke, 1994. Studies conducted have supported construct validity (Chernysheno, Stark, & Chan, 2001; Conn & Rieke, 1994; Catell & Krug, 1986; Gerbing & Tuley, 1991; Hofer, Horn, & Eber, 1997). Translation into several languages – Italian, French, Japanese, German – are available for the 16PF. The test's applied validity to counseling, career development, personality assessment and clinical problems has been supported (Kelly, 1999; Krug & Johns, 1990; Schuerger & Watterson, 1998). The 16PF is an established instrument receiving thousands of publications and qualified recommendations.

#### *Procedure*

To ensure better response, co-operation, genuine interest and personal contact, the investigator was sent personally to each school. Principals of these schools or colleges were contacted and their help was sought for the administration of the tools and collection of data and dates was fixed for the collection of the data. The investigator established rapport with the respondents. All the two sets of tests were given to each student and instructions were given to all the students. During the process of administering the research, doubts related to questionnaire were clarified.

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After the data was gathered from the participants, scoring was done according to the norms. Later, comparison was done between adolescent's personality characteristics and online self-presentation. The research also found the influence of some of the demographic variables as gender and different age group (16-25) on personality characteristics and self-presentation on social networking sites.

### **RESULTS**

Significant result found that individuals characteristics differ from online self-presentation. The findings suggest that people's online persona is quite different to what they actually were. For instance, a person if introvert in nature, would be quite active on social media suggesting he or she was quite popular and was an extrovert by nature. There were no significant relationships between various personality traits and individuals' online self-presentation.

### **DISCUSSION**

Overall, results showed that there were no significant relationships between various personality traits and individuals' online self- presentation. Considering the lack of an existing explanatory framework to account for self-presentational efforts online, this study approached the question of whether individual online status, post articles and self-presentation accurately portray personality.

Social media can provide a supportive environment to explore romance, friendship and social status, while also providing adolescent an opportunity to share and discuss their taste in music, ideas of drama and films, online games and other aspects of civilization (ITO, 2008). 17% of adolescents who use the internet report use it to gather info about health topics that are hard to discuss with others, such as drugs use and sexual health (Lenhart, 2010)

People differ in how they want to present themselves, differ in considering a desirable identity to present and differ on how they want to be seen. But people do have in common that they want to pursue desired self-images (Banaji & Prentice, 1994). The ways people self-present are influenced by numerous factors, including properties of the self-presenter and properties of the social context. However, research on the factors that determine the specific form of self-presentation and the extent of self-disclosure online are still scarce (Krämer & Winter, 2008).

Only a small number of studies on new media have considered personality characteristics as a potential determinant for the specific form of self-presentation (Krämer & Winter, 2008; Marcus, Machilek, & Schütz, 2006). Some studies use a content analysis of user profiles on social network sites to better understand how individuals present themselves online and what types of information they disclose. By sharing personal information people are shaping their identity, and the levels of self-disclosed information varies from releasing detailed personal information to blocking the profile as a whole (Jones, Millenmaier, Goya-Martinez, & Schuler, 2008; Lange, 2008).

New media changes the norms of social interaction and provide for a new form of self-presentation. It is personalized and prefabricated providing in many ways to self-present. Through their profiles on social network sites, people can present themselves using direct and indirect ways. New media provides individuals the opportunity to construct digital

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collages using symbols and signs to represent and express their self-concepts (Jensen Schau & Gilly, 2003).

In new media, people have more control over their self-presentational behavior than in face-to-face communication (Krämer & Winter, 2008), which serves as an ideal environment for impression management as described by Goffman (1959) and self-expression.

### **CONCLUSION**

The results also showed that high extroverts and highly conscientious personalities were different from each other or other personality types when looking at the information shared online, and paid a lot of stress whether it was personal information or not. For the present study, it was hypothesized that along with extraverted individuals' conscientious individuals would also be less likely to post personal information online because they are more aware and careful about what they say to others.

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***Conflict of Interest***

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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