Narcissism, extraversion and adolescents' self-presentation on Facebook

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Abstract

Social Networking Sites (e.g. Facebook), which afford self-presentation, are gaining popularity amongst adolescents. This study examined the relationship of narcissism and extraversion on adolescents' self-presentation in four Facebook profile features (profile picture, status updates, social network size, photo count), as reported by Grade 7–Grade 9 adolescents. After accounting for extraversion, narcissism predicted features presenting self-generated content (profile picture rating, status update frequency), but not features presenting system-generated content (social network size, photo count).

Keywords: Narcissism, Extraversion, Facebook, Self-presentation

1. Introduction

Modern computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools, such as Social Networking Sites (SNS), have seamlessly combined email, instant messaging, website creation, blogging and multimedia content sharing (Livingstone, 2008). The proliferation of SNS, such as Facebook (www.facebook.com), has also been matched with an expanding body of research. One area of research has shown that self-reported personality traits are good predictors of SNS usage and are reflected in personal profiles or webpages on SNS (e.g. Correa, Hinsley, & de Zuniga, 2010; Kramer & Winter, 2008). Amongst the Big Five personality traits, extraversion has been consistently found to be the most important personality trait in predicting SNS usage (e.g. Correa et al., 2010). Media attention has also linked self-presentation on social media with the dispositional trait of narcissism. A recent cross-temporal meta-analysis found narcissism levels in American college students to have risen over the past two decades (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008). Indeed, the opportunities for self-promotion afforded by current technological trends vastly exceed that allowed by traditional media, but it is likely that the rise in narcissism has influenced the ways individuals use technology, for this rise in narcissism had mostly occurred before such technology was extensively adopted (Twenge et al., 2008).

Interestingly, narcissists have also been well-documented as highly extraverted individuals (e.g. Vazire, Naumann, Rentfrow, & Gosling, 2008). Yet, limited existing literature has examined both extraversion and narcissism in the context of SNS. Also, despite the rising popularity of SNS amongst adolescents, there has been limited research sampling this population. The goal of the present study is to examine both personality traits of extraversion and narcissism as manifested in certain features of adolescents' Facebook profiles. Existing literature on SNS and the personality traits of extraversion and narcissism will first be reviewed in relation to self-presentational behavior.

1.1. Social Networking Sites and self-presentation

Among the various psychological phenomena that SNS presents, exhibitionistic or self-presentational behavior is especially interesting. Given that users of SNS have almost full control over informational disclosure, they can be more strategic in managing self-presentation, as compared to traditional face-to-face interactions (Bibby, 2008; Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Kramer & Winter, 2008). Moreover, given the social exposure that SNS affords, enhancement of self-image should be expected with online self-presentation (Walther, 2007). Nevertheless, users need to address broad audiences through self-presentation on their SNS profiles, making stable personality traits key predictors of self-presentation on SNS (Kramer & Winter, 2008).

There are various features available on SNS profiles that contribute to an individual's overall online portrait (Tong, Van...
1.4. Narcissism and Social Networking Sites

Narcissism is characterized by a highly inflated, positive but unrealistic self-concept, a lack of interest in forming strong interpersonal relationships, and an engagement in self-regulatory strategies to affirm the positive self-views (Campbell & Foster, 2007). Narcissists are exhibitionistic, attention-seeking, and are acutely concerned about their physical appearances (Vazire et al., 2008). Expectedly, narcissists overestimate their attractiveness (Bleske-Rechek, Remiker, & Baker, 2008; Gabriel, Critelli, & Ee, 1994), though they do put in effort to look well-groomed and fashionable (Vazire et al., 2008). These strategies help affirm their positive illusions of their own physical attractiveness (Bleske-Rechek et al., 2008; Gabriel et al., 1994). Narcissists are also often skilled with dealing with new social settings and with starting new relationships, though they mostly seek relationships which can enhance their status and positive self-views (Campbell & Foster, 2007).

Recent literature has documented the manifestation of narcissism in SNS usage. Buffardi and Campbell (2008), in their pioneering study, proposed that SNS provide excellent platforms for narcissistic self-regulation, because SNS allow almost full control over self-presentation and afford the ability to maintain large social network bases of superficial relationships, which narcissists would be especially drawn to. As expected, narcissists had more Facebook friends and wall-posts, and had profile pictures that are rated by others to be more physically attractive and more self-promoting than the profile pictures of non-narcissists. In this regard, the researchers speculate that narcissists may have selected more attractive photos of themselves to affirm their inflated beliefs. Finally, in examining both narcissism and extraversion in relation to rationales for Facebook usage, Bibby (2008) found narcissism to predict usage of Facebook to occupy time, to pursue leisure interests, and to interact with romantic interests, over and above extraversion, suggesting that narcissists enjoy the exhibitionistic nature of SNS.

1.5. The present study

The key research question was to examine the relationship of narcissism and extraversion on adolescents’ self-presentation in four Facebook profile features. Given that SNS such as Facebook afford remarkable self-presentationational opportunities that fulfill the self-regulatory needs of narcissists, it is likely that such sites tremendously appeal to narcissists, whereas extraverts are likely to rely as much on other forms of social communication as they do on SNS. Thus, it is expected that narcissism should be able to predict the Facebook variables over and above extraversion. The following four hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Narcissism will predict higher self-ratings of Facebook profile pictures over and above extraversion.
H2: Narcissism will predict a higher frequency of updating Facebook status over and above extraversion.
H3: Narcissism will predict having more Facebook friends over and above extraversion.
H4: Narcissism will predict having more Facebook photos over and above extraversion.
دریافت فوری
متن کامل مقاله
امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات