

Relationship between narcissism and social media



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Summary of aims, methodology and findings of the target paper

The aim of Ong. et. al (2011)'s study was to examine the relationship of narcissism and extraversion on adolescents' self-presentation on Facebook usage. Ong. et. al (2011) especially focused on four Facebook profile features: profile picture, status updates, social network size and photo count. The study has made a broad hypothesis of which narcissism is expected to be able to predict the Facebook variables over and above extraversion. The hypothesis was then divided into the following four different directions.

H1: Narcissism will predict higher self-ratings of Facebook profile pictures

H2: Narcissism will predict a higher frequency of updating Facebook status

H3: Narcissism will predict having more Facebook friends

H4: Narcissism will predict having more Facebook photos

The researchers selected 360 adolescents in a range of 12 to 18 years old randomly from two government schools in Singapore to participate the study. Only 275 adolescents who have Facebook accounts were chosen in the final samples. The 12-item Narcissistic Personality Questionnaire for Children-Revised (NPQC-R) (Ang & Raine, 2009) was used to assess the personality trait of narcissism. Participants rated the items on a five-point Likert scale, the higher the score is, the higher level of narcissism as a trait the person has. The personality trait of extraversion was assessed by using the 12-item Extraversion subscale of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Participants rated the items based on a five-point Likert scale as well. The higher the score is, the higher level of extraversion

as a trait the person has. Participants were also requested to estimate their frequency of Facebook status updates and the number of friends they had or number of photos they were present in. They also rated their physical appearance in their current profile picture on a five-point Likert scale.

The four hypotheses were tested by using four hierarchical regression analyses. Age, gender and grade were control variables and they were not measured in the experiment. The first two hierarchical regression analyses showed that narcissism is significantly predict the Facebook profile picture ratings and the frequency of Facebook status updates over and above extraversion. However, the last two hierarchical regression analyses showed that narcissism is neither significant predict the number of Facebook friends nor the number of Facebook photos over and above extraversion. In another word, the first two hypotheses were supported while the last two hypotheses were not supported. Furthermore, the study had proved that more extraverted adolescents tend to engage in greater self-presentation on the four Facebook features compared with less extraverted ones by rating 12 items. However, Ong. et. al (2011) listed some limitations for this research. For example, there were only four Facebook features were included in the investigation, more other features were ignored and those might affect the results. To improve that, more surveys should be done to eliminate the possible errors. At the same time, the experiment entirely based on self-report answers and for some narcissistic adolescents, they might give false information which could lead to more biased results. To improve that, investigators could ask participants' friends or strangers to rate their profile picture photos.

Summary of aims, methodology and findings of Di Wang (2017)

Di Wang (2017)'s study of the relationship between narcissism, extraversion, drive for entertainment and narcissistic behaviour on social networking sites had used the target paper as a reference. Compared with the target paper, Di Wang (2017) investigated two more social behaviours as variables. The study examined the relationship between these personalities or behaviour and a popular Chinese social networking site, Wechat Moment. The paper also investigated whether demographic variables and online time played a role in that dynamic.

Di Wang (2017) raised four hypotheses: H1(Narcissism will predict higher exhibitionistic behaviour over and above drive for entertainment and extraversion) H2 (Narcissism will predict higher ratings of one's Wechat profile picture over) H3 (Narcissism will predict higher frequency of Wechat Moment posting) H4 (Narcissism will predict using an image of oneself as a profile picture on Wechat Moment) By examining these hypotheses, a survey has been conducted which was the same method used by Ong et. al (2011).

A total of 810 undergraduate students aged 18 and above from University in Macau, China participated the survey. 778 participants who currently use Wechat Moment were chosen into the final samples. The majorities are from different provinces in China, some are international students and they are ranged in age from 18 to 61 years old. Most of them have at least college education background which reduced the possible bias in participants. The independent variables were narcissism and extraversion. The personality trait of narcissism was assessed by using the Narcissistic Personality

Inventory - 29-item version (NPI-29) (Kansi, 2003). Each items paired with one narcissistic behaviour and one non-narcissistic behaviour and they were rated from 0 to 1. Besides the total narcissism scale, NPI-29 also provided scores for four sub-factors: leadership/power, exhibitionism/self-admiration, superiority/arrogance and uniqueness/entitlement. The personality of trait of extraversion was examined by using the 12- item extraversion subscale of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory. (Costa & McCrae, 1992a) It was the same rating scale used with Ong. E. Y(2011)'s measure for extraversion. The dependent variables were exhibitionistic behaviour, posting frequency, real person profile picture and profile picture attractiveness. Participants were asked to indicate certain behaviours as the experiment listed and frequencies are rated on a 5-point scale. An exhibitionistic act index was created by taking the average of the answers. To measure the frequency of posting, participants were asked straightaway about how often they posted pictures on Wechat. Answers were recorded by calculating the percentage of the posting. Finally, participants were asked to indicate their attractiveness to others. Scores were ranged from 1 to 5 and the index of profile picture attractiveness was calculated by taking the average of answers. The control variable was age, gender and education background. Online time was also controlled in this study as Di Wang (2017) thought people who have more time to browse online were more likely to engage with narcissistic behaviours than those had less online time. Therefore, participants were asked to estimate how much hours they spent online per day and answers were included into a continuous variable. Besides all these variables, checking frequency and posting content were also provided by participants as two descriptive variables for more information for further analyses.

Gender as a control variable was examined to see whether men and women differ across independent variables and dependent variables by using the T-test. The findings showed that women behaved more exhibitionistic than men as they spent more time to browse online. However, women scored lower on extraversion and narcissism than men, they also scored lower rating on profile pictures than men. The study showed that age had a significant correlation with drive for entertainment and also, online time had a significant correlation with posting frequency. After the hierarchical regression analyses, H1, H2 and H4 were supported. These results were consistent with target paper showing that narcissism was positively associated with rating of one's Facebook profile picture (Ong et. al 2011). H3 was rejected as the findings suggested drive for entertainment and extraversion, narcissism did not predict Wechat Moment posting frequency. This result conflicts with previous studies that found that narcissism predicted the frequency of Facebook status updates (Ong et. al 2011).

Summary of aims, methodology and findings of Tara et. al (2015)

Tara C et. al (2015)'s study on the Big Five, self-esteem and narcissism as predictors of the topics people write about in Facebook status updates discussed similar research questions with Ong et. al (2011). They both focused on Facebook usage. However, this study examined more personalities besides narcissism and extraversion. Big five are five personality traits of extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. The first purpose of this study was to examine the personality traits associated with updating frequency about five topics: social activities, intellectual pursuits, diet/exercise, accomplishments and

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significant relationships. The secondary purpose was to examine whether people who update more frequently about certain topics receive more 'likes' and 'comments' to their updates.

Tara et. al (2015) raised 8 hypotheses in this paper.

H1: extraversion would be positively associated with updating about social activities.

H2: neuroticism would be positively associated with updating about close relationships and the selection of these topics would be motivated by their use of Facebook for validation and self-expression.

H3: the openness would be positively associated with updating about intellectual topics and it would be mediated by the use of Facebook for sharing information.

H4: the interpersonal focus of agreeable people and their use of Facebook for communication may inspire more frequent updates about their social activities and significant relationships.

H5: the conscientiousness would be positively associated with updating about inoffensive topics and it would be mediated by the lower tendency of using Facebook for validation.

H6: the self-esteem would be negatively associated with updating about a romantic partner and it would be associated by the use of Facebook for validation.

H7: narcissists' status updates will more frequently reference their achievements and their diet/exercise routine.

H8: people might receive less 'likes' and comments when they update about their romantic partners.

Tara et. al (2015) used the same methodology with Ong et. al (2011). Total of 555 American Facebook users were selected to complete an online survey consists of demographic questions. The 35-item Berkeley Personality Profile (Harary&Donahue, 1994) was used to assess the Big Five personality traits. The 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was used to assess self-esteem. The 13-item version of Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI13 Gentile et. al, 2013) was used to measure Narcissism. Participants were asked to indicate the frequency of write about 20 topics in their Facebook status updates, these topics varied from social life to diet/exercise. They were also asked the number of their Facebook friends, how often and how much time spent on checking and updating their Facebook per week. Besides, the study also measured four motives for using Facebook and participants indicated their agreement by using a 1-7 Likert scale. The number of 'likes' and comments were recorded according to the report of participants.

The findings showed that H1, H3 and H7 was fully supported. H2 was partially supported as neuroticism was associated with using Facebook for validation. There was no support for H4 and H8. H5 was not supported but it showed that conscientiousness was associated with writing more frequent updates about one's children. Moreover, conscientiousness was not

negatively associated with using Facebook for validation, it was positively associated with using Facebook to share information and communication. H6 was partially supported as people with lower self-esteem indeed updated about their romantic partners more frequently, but they were more likely to use Facebook for self-expression rather than for validation. H1 and H7 were consistent with Ong et. al (2011)'s hypothesis which proved that narcissists and extraverted people prefer more self-presentation on Facebook.

The main limitation in Tara et. al (2015)'s study was the survey solely based on self-report by participants, narcissistic people might report inaccurate answers due to high self-esteem. To improve, system generated ratings could be applied in another survey. Meanwhile, people gain 'likes' and comments mostly from close friends, so closeness of friendship in Facebook determined the number of 'Likes' participants received. It might be biased because people might have more close friends offline than online. To improve, offline friends could be invited to participate in the status update survey.

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