Gender Differences in Personality, Locus of Control And Social Motives Among Facebook Users

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to analyze the personality, locus of control and social motives among users and non-users of Facebook. Sample of 30 Facebook users and 30 Facebook non-users, consisting of 15 males and 15 females in each group were selected using random sampling technique. Assessment of personality was done using Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire developed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1969). Locus of control was assessed using Levenson's Locus of Control Scale developed by Levenson (1972). Social motives were assessed by using Social Motives Scale developed by Singh and Bhargava (1999). The data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and 2-way ANOVA. The findings of the study indicate that Facebook users and Facebook non-users differ on the psychoticism and neuroticism sub-scales of Personality; all three sub-scales of Locus of Control; and all three sub-scales of Social Motives. Males and females differ on all three sub-scales of Personality; individual control sub-scale of Locus of Control; and, all three sub-scales of Social Motives. There is a significant interactive effect of Facebook usage and gender on extraversion, neuroticism, powerful others and chance control (external locus of control). Findings of the study can be used to understand the personality dimensions, style of attribution and the social motives of Facebook users and non-users. Based on the findings we can predict the reasons behind Facebook addiction.

Introduction

Personality is defined by Gordon Allport as the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems which determine his unique adjustment to his environment. Locus of Control, as proposed by Julian Rotter, is the degree to which people believe their lives to be under their control and is an important dimension of individual variation. Social Motives are the motives implied in social events or behaviours. Facebook is an online social networking service that was founded on February 4, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg.

Personality of an individual is an important determinant of his/her behavior. Locus of Control and Social Motives are the concepts that come under the larger concept of personality. Though people have their own, different reasons to use Facebook, it has been observed that the users tend to have a particular personality type, style of attribution and motives. Even gender plays a role in this behavior.

Users of Facebook tend to be less inhibited to disclose their personal information. Since they have already been exposed to many kinds of personalities on the social networking sites, they tend to be less nervous in social situations. They have a tendency to believe that their behavior and its consequences are under their control and not in the hands of people around them or controlled by luck, chance or fate.

The non-users of Facebook usually have a high wish to gain knowledge, wisdom, comforts, success, position etc. In the process of attaining and achieving all or some of the previously mentioned aspects in life, they may be less motivated to maintain close social contacts. However, users tend to have a high motive to control others, maintain good interpersonal relationships and remain socially active.

Personality, locus of control and social motives vary among men and women. Females usually have a lesser psychotic tendency but a more neurotic tendency compared to males. They have a more external locus of control than the males. Achievement and power motives are lesser in women than in men. However, the social-contact motives are more in women.

The above stated findings may vary with age, culture and economic status. For example, adolescent and old aged Facebook users may be more motivated to maintain close social relationships than middle aged users. In Eastern cultures like Japan and China, the average level of extraversion among Facebook users may be lesser than that of Westerners. These differences are due to the values promoted by different cultures. Individuals belonging to higher socio-economic classes are more motivated to gain power while those belonging to lower economic classes have a high achievement motive.

Objective

To study the gender differences among Facebook users and non-users with respect to personality, locus of control and social motives.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to Personality.
2. There is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to Locus of Control.
3. There is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to Social Motives

Review of literature

Michikyan, Kaveri and Jessica (2014) examined the link between neuroticism, extraversion, as well as presentation of the real, the ideal, and the false self on Facebook. Self-reports were collected from 261 young adults (ages 18–30) about personality, online self-presentation, and Facebook use. Statistical correlation revealed that the level of extraversion was positively associated with Facebook activity level. A series of regression analyses revealed that young adults high in neuroticism reported presenting their ideal and false self on Facebook to a greater extent whereas those low in extraversion reported engaging in greater online self-exploratory behaviors. Findings suggest that young adults who are experiencing emotional instability may be strategic in their online self-presentation perhaps to seek reassurance, and those who have self-doubt further explore their self online. The highlights of this study were: Neuroticism was not related to Facebook activity level, or time spent on Facebook. Extraversion was related to Facebook activity level; was not related to Facebook time. Personality characteristics predict different kinds of online self-presentation. Greater neuroticism predicted greater online presentation of the ideal and false self. Lower extraversion predicted greater self-exploratory online presentation.

Tingya and Tang (2014) studied the possible relationships among personality traits, Facebook usages, and leisure activities. Three hypotheses were proposed: users with different personality traits may have different Facebook usages, users with different personality traits may have different leisure activities, and users with different Facebook usages may have different leisure activities. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect data from 500 college students in Taiwan. A questionnaire with 30 items was developed to collect data. Statistics methods such as descriptive statistics, independent *t* tests, ANOVA were used to analyze the data with a statistical significance of

$p < .05$. The hypotheses were partially supported. Participants with high extraversion, low agreeableness and high openness tended to spend more times on Facebook and have more number of friends and photos. The findings confirmed that high extraversion and high openness people liked to socialize on Facebook (more time, more friends, more photos) also liked to socialize in real life (more time on team sports and recreational activities), but low agreeableness and low emotional stability people liked to use Facebook for socializing in lieu of real life socializing.

Method
Design:
The study adopts an ex-post factorial design.

Sample:
A total of 60 people belonging to the age group 20-35 years were selected using random sampling. Facebook user and non-user groups consisted of 15 males and 15 females each.

Definition of terms:
Personality:
Conceptual definition:
Eysenck defines personality as the more or less stable and enduring organization of a person's character, temperament, intellect and physique which determines his unique adjustment to the environment.

Operational definition:
Personality refers to the more or less stable and enduring organization of person's character across extraversion, psychoticism and neuroticism dimensions as measured by Eysenck Personality Questionnaire.

Locus of Control:
Conceptual definition:
It refers to the degree to which people believe their lives to be under the control of internal or external factors.

Operational definition:
It refers to the degree to which people believe their lives to be under the control of internal or external factors as measured by Levenson's Locus of Control Scale.

Social Motives:
Conceptual definition:
Social motives refer to the motives implied in social events or behaviours.

Operational definition:
Social motives refer to the achievement, power and social-contact motives implied in social events or behaviours as measured by Social Motives Scale.

Facebook User:
Conceptual definition:
Person who is using Facebook from a minimum of one month and falls in the age group 20-35 years.

Operational definition:
Person who is using Facebook from a minimum of one month and falls in the age group 20-35 years.

Tests:
1. Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1969)

The questionnaire consists of 90 yes/no questions measuring three personality dimensions – Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism. It has lie scale.

Scoring:
If the answer to an item corresponds to the one given in scoring key 1 mark is given. Marks of items measuring the corresponding dimensions and lie scale are totaled separately. Sten scores are obtained using norms.

Reliability and Validity:
Test-retest correlation coefficients for different dimensions ranged from 0.78 to 0.89. It had sufficient degree of validity for psychiatric population.

2. Locus of Control Scale (Levenson, 1972)
It is a 5-point Likert type scale consisting of 24 statements, measuring 3 aspects – powerful others, chance control and individual control.

Scoring:
1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 marks are allotted for the options strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree respectively. Marks of items measuring the corresponding aspects are totaled separately. Sten scores are obtained using norms.

Reliability and Validity:
Test-retest reliability was 0.76. Correlation coefficient was 0.56 when it was validated using Rotter's Locus of Control Scale.

3. Social Motives Scale (Singh and Bhargava, 1999)
It has 36 items measuring 3 areas – achievement, power and social-contact motives. Each item consists of 2 statements (one relating to each tendency – approach and avoidance). Subjects must respond by selecting 1 of the 2 statements and rating the degree (1, 2 or 3) to which it applies to them.

Scoring:
Rating given by the respondent for each item is itself the score for that item. Scores of items measuring the corresponding areas are totaled separately. Sten scores are obtained using norms.

Reliability and Validity:
Split-half reliability coefficients ranged from 0.52 to 0.88 for different areas. Construct validity was established by consensual decision of 5 judges.

Procedure:
The desired samples were personally contacted to get the approval to be a part of the study. The purpose of the study was briefed and rapport was established. The background information was collected in the answer sheets. The tests – Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire, Levenson's Locus of Control Scale and Social Motives Scale were administered according to the instructions given in the respective manuals. The participants were allowed to clarify their doubts, if any. After the completion of responses all three questionnaires were collected and subjects were thanked for their participation.

Results and Discussion
Table 1
Summary for 2-way ANOVA for facebook usage and gender on three dimensions of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire

Area	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Extraversion	Usage	0.150	1	0.15	0.05 ns
	Gender	88.817	1	88.82	29.89**
	Usage*Gender	74.817	1	74.82	25.18**
Psychoticism	Usage	109.350	1	109.35	201.43**
	Gender	2.817	1	2.82	5.19*
	Usage*Gender	0.417	1	0.42	0.77 ns
Neuroticism	Usage	170.017	1	170.02	144.26**
	Gender	36.817	1	36.82	31.24**
	Usage*Gender	4.817	1	4.82	4.09*

**P<0.01; *P<0.05; ns: Not Significant

Facebook users and non-users differ significantly on psychoticism and neuroticism dimensions and don't differ significantly on extraversion dimension. Males and females differ significantly on all three dimensions of Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. There is a significant interactive effect among usage and gender variables with respect to extraversion and neuroticism dimensions. Hence the first null hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to personality is rejected.

Table 2
Summary for 2-way ANOVA for facebook usage and gender on three aspects of Levenson's Locus of Control Scale

Area	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Powerful Others	Usage	365.067	1	365.07	468.89**
	Gender	0.067	1	0.07	0.09 ns
	Usage*Gender	15.000	1	15.00	19.27**
Chance Control	Usage	380.017	1	380.02	521.59**
	Gender	0.150	1	0.15	0.21 ns
	Usage*Gender	14.017	1	14.02	19.24**
Individual Control	Usage	256.267	1	256.27	241.87**
	Gender	26.667	1	26.67	25.17**
	Usage*Gender	1.067	1	1.07	1.01 ns

**P<0.01; ns: Not Significant

Facebook users and non-users differ significantly in all three aspects of locus of control – powerful others, chance control and individual control. Males and females differ significantly in the individual control aspect. There is a significant interactive effect among usage and gender variables with respect to powerful others and chance control. Hence the second null hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to locus of control is rejected

Table 3
Summary for 2-way ANOVA for facebook usage and gender on three areas of Social Motives Scale

Area	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F
Achievement Motive	Usage	209.067	1	209.07	209.07**
	Gender	48.600	1	48.60	48.60**
	Usage*Gender	0.067	1	0.07	0.07 ns
Power Motive	Usage	268.817	1	268.82	111.13**
	Gender	43.350	1	43.35	17.92**
	Usage*Gender	1.350	1	1.35	0.56 ns
Social-Contact Motive	Usage	156.817	1	156.82	98.89**
	Gender	30.817	1	30.82	19.43**
	Usage*Gender	3.750	1	3.75	2.37 ns

**P<0.01; ns: Not Significant

Facebook users and non-users differ significantly in achievement, power and social-contact motives. Males and females differ significantly in all three areas of social motives scale. There is no significant interactive effect among usage and gender variables with respect to achievement, power and social-contact motives. Hence the third null hypothesis that there is no significant gender difference among Facebook users and non-users with respect to social motives is rejected.

The results are not similar to the studies conducted by Michikyan, Kaveri and Jessica (2014). This may be due to the differences in socio demographic variables of the sample selected in the two studies.

Findings:
1. Facebook users and non-users differ on psychoticism and neuroticism sub-scales of Personality; all three sub-scales of Locus of Control; and all three sub-scales of Social Motives.
2. Males and females differ on all three sub-scales of Personality; individual control sub-scale of Locus of Control; and, all three sub-scales of Social Motives.
3. There is a significant interactive effect of Facebook usage and gender on extraversion, neuroticism, external locus of control (powerful others and chance control).

Scope for further study:
1. The study can be expanded by taking a larger sample.
2. Other age groups can also be considered.
3. Studies can be done by considering cultural factors.
4. Participants from different geographical areas may be studied.
5. Various other social networking sites can be consider

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