



## Role of Social Media in Encouraging Narcissistic Personality : A Qualitative Aspect

### KEYWORDS

social networking, facebook, twitter, gtalk, narcissism, personality

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**ABSTRACT** *Social Networking sites have created a boom in the present age. With the increasing use of social networking sites, its impact on human beings is also increasing. One such component of human beings that social networking sites are having an impact on is Personality. These socialising sites are having less positive and more negative impact on personality as has been found by various researches conducted on this issue. Psychologists and neurologists are of the opinion that it does more harm to one's personality than it benefits. This paper aims to study the impact that social networking sites like social networking sites, twitter, gtalk etc have on personality as a whole with special reference to its impact on encouraging narcissistic traits within the personality of its users. The results and implications of the study have been discussed at length in the paper.*

### Introduction

The world is abuzz with the word Social networking and every tom dick and harry is placed on the social network on one or the other website. From global star celebrities to the local vendors and chai wala's every person now seems to be having an ID on these networking sites and the most prominent of these sites is FACEBOOK, TWITTER & GTALK. Facebook has been the most famous and the busiest of social networking sites available through the internet. The main aim of these website is to keep people connected. These website are providing a platform where in people keep the links alive with all those friends and associates they wish to. This platform helps in easy sharing of information, data, and happenings of day to day with all those connected people. The saying "Science is a blessing and a curse too" goes very well with Social networking sites too. Social networking sites have tremendous advantages but have been a cause of lots of mishappenings as well. It is because of these things that Social media has been a centre of attraction for the researchers all over the globe. The researchers have even tried to draw romantic insights from the social networking sites by drawing network maps. Social media undoubtedly has many advantages, as young social networking users are better at showing virtual empathy to their online friends and also helps introverts to learn how to socialize behind the safety of the screens. Besides it helps people learn about different cultures traditions and languages by interacting with people living in different parts of the world. It has literally shrunk the whole world into a page. It has huge behavioural implications on the users which are good as well as bad. The excessive use of social networking sites can be a cause of various psychological disorders, mania's, anti-social behaviour, aggressive tendencies etc. Besides overuse of Social networking sites has been a result of various health related issues like depression, anxiety etc. This paper aims to study the impact that Social networking sites have on the increasing trend of narcissistic personality traits developing in the teenagers.

Traits are a relatively enduring qualities present in every individual. We all possess a certain specific sets of traits which make us unique, give shape to our personality and make us distinguishable from the other individuals. The Myer Briggs Type Indicator shortlisted 16 personality types based on the permutation and combinations of the available traits like, Extraverte & Introverted, Thinking & Feeling, Sensing & Intuitive, Judging & Perceiving. The excessive use of social networking sites can have a serious impact on Personality as it can lead to shifting of inclination from better traits to

worst traits. Use of social networking sites can be useful in helping an introvert to learn to socialize behind the laptop screens to develop extrovertness and vice versa as well. Social networking sites can lead to increase in sensitivity of an individual making him more emotional kinds and lessen his cognitive logical capacity. Social networking sites can lead to selective perception and thereby distorting the real image of that object or thing. Any object whether good or bad can be portrayed in a good or bad light as per the convenience and liking of the user. The power of social networking sites has now an impact on political campaign's and lives of the celebrities so much so that each political party and celebrity has an official social networking sites page of its own. They have understood the value that social networking sites can have on the perception of people towards their party and their image. It has increased the tendency of individuals becoming

### Research Objective

- To review literature on social networking sites and Personality.
- To study the impact of social media on Personality.
- To study the impact of social media on Narcissistic traits in a Personality.

### Literature Review

Several studies have examined the attraction and persuasive character of this online platform and similar networking sites (e.g., Fogg and Iizawa, 2008), as well as the reasons that cause people from all walks of life and age ranges to join this community or similar options. Many people actively participate in content generation and value creation, and several researchers (e.g., Young et al., 2009; Vasalou et al., 2010) have examined their profiles to determine why and to what extent they are keen on posting their entire identity, sharing pictures and videos, and indicating their religious affiliations, marital status, and political orientations on the Internet. Some people recognize that they "have outsourced their social life exclusively to Social networking sites" (Schulten, 2009a). Several studies note people's Internet-related attitudes; their interests and activities vary with their age, gender, and personality traits (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005; Nazir et al., 2009). The way people use online social networks—especially in terms of their behavioral patterns and attitudes toward information sharing and privacy—is a direct result of and reflection on their cultural backgrounds (Kiesler, 1997). Previous literature has demonstrated that personality traits reflect attitudes and represent people's predispositions to perform specific activities or exhibit particular behaviors (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977;

Daervaraj et al., 2008). Personality traits are the characteristics that, along with values, shape people's identities and form their attitudes (Oliver and Mooradian, 2003; Roccas et al., 2002).. They also indicate the level of individuals' need to interact with others and inner motives and goals, such as increasing self-esteem or meeting an emotional need (Hardie and Tee, 2007). Personality traits have been discussed extensively to explain people's online behavior, students' attitude toward education, and the impact on their academic performance (Blickle, 1996; De Raad and Schouwenburg). Furnham et al. (2003) and Lounsbury et al. (2005) argue that personality also social behavior thus depends on their trust in people (Golbeck, 2009), though Uslaner (2000) argues that trust sometimes does not matter in online social interactions. Another aspect of personality, specifically jealousy, has been associated with the use of Social networking sites. Buffardi and Campbell (2010) correlated narcissistic personality to social networking sites activities and found a positive relationship and showed signs of excessive self promotion. Similar results were reported by Mehdizadeh (2010) where in users spent most amount of time on self promotional photos enhanced by Photoshop. Muise, Christofides, and Desmarais (2009) report frequent Social networking sites users in romantic and sexual relationships have an increased amount of jealousy due to the open nature of the social networking site. Ong & Colleagues (2011) examined the relationship between narcissism & extraversion and found higher frequency of self generated content. In sum, the review of literature on social networking sites suggest that there is a positive correlation between social networking sites usage and narcissism.

### Research Methodology

**Research Design:-** The respondents were asked to go through focus group discussions and interviews consisting of open ended questions. The responses were categorised by the researcher into positive and negative impacts that are being caused by the social media on personality.

**Sample size :-** The sample for this research consisted of 150 Facebook & Twitter users within the Central University of Kashmir Campus & 50 users from Kashmir University Campus. The sample was randomly selected.

**Sampling Design:-** This research is an exploratory qualitative research conducted by the researcher on the basis of personal experiences on social networking sites and the interviews and discussions conducted by the researcher. The secondary data available on various websites and magazines was also used to formulate a stronger opinion about the role of social media on personality. This study was conducted to understand the impact that social media has on personality especially on narcissistic traits.

### Interpretation & Findings

- Social networking sites is encouraging narcissistic traits in young users.
- It is making people more attention seeking, and giving them a false feeling of self grandios.
- It is diminishing the distinction between the real world and the virtual world, because users somehow take the praises and compliments on their uploaded pictures, videos and statuses far too seriously than they should.
- With the advent of softwares like photoshop and photo edit users are morphing their pictures to make them look far better than they actually are thus projecting themselves falsely and hence the fake compliments.
- This platform is encouraging for many talented writers and artists to showcase their talents and inturn yield appreciation, but at they same time it is forcing not so talented artists to make a mockery of the art to keep up with visibility alive.
- Its excessive use is giving users a false feeling of being multi talented.
- It can be a cause of various psychological diseases, stresses and anxiety which a user may encounter when the veil of virtual world shatters on seeing the face of the real world.
- Social networking sites decreases attention spans, enhances sensationalism, inability to empathize and an insecure sense of identity.
- Social networking sites can be distracting and can negatively impact learning. Studies found that middle school, high school, and college students who checked Social networking sites at least once during a 15-minute study period achieved lower grades.
- Excessive use keeps the users devoid of emotional attachments with their close associates and neighbours who do not fancy being on social networking sites.

### Suggestions & Recommendations

- The use of social networking sites should be limited and their should be an age limit for under age users to use the site.
- Awareness should be created about the distinction between real world and virtual world.
- Compliments and praises, insulting and derogatory words on social networking sites should not be taken too seriously because of lack of expressability of this platform.
- Users should refrain from seeking unnecessary attention, and stop encouraging self grandios within themselves on the basis of social networking sites compliments.
- People should reserve some time for themselves and family and reduce social networking sites time inorder to get a reality check about their actual standing.

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