

THE EFFECT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS (BIG- 5 FACTORS) ON THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS OF NORTH BENGAL

Abstract

We live in a scientific and technological era. Both have gained prominence in almost all parts of the world. Even in economically backward countries, there is a desire for science and scientific achievement. Today, scientific and technological achievements are used to evaluate the economic strength and progress of nations. In fact, in all post-industrial societies, control of information, particularly scientific and technical information, is a source of prestige and power. Particularly at the start of the twenty-first century, nations that excel in fields such as computers and supercomputers, information technology, electronics, biotechnology, telecommunications, and so on are commonly regarded as the most modern and technologically and scientifically advanced nations. And so, we cannot but confess that we are surrounded by technology and we use it in our day-to-day life. Of course, not being aware of how these media affect us, especially psychologically, which is very vivid in one's behavioural traits, we may tend to interpret one's behaviour in different ways, and so this study was conducted to make ourselves aware of these personality traits and how they may affect usage of social media.

Keywords: Social Media Site, Facebook, Instagram, Openness, Extrovert, Introvert, Agreeableness

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I. INTRODUCTION

Technology and technological developments have reached their pinnacles in modern society, which is frequently referred to as a technological society. Though technology has become increasingly important in today's world, it has yet to take a prominent place in sociological thinking. While this is not our topic of discussion, it may become increasingly important as technology advances. Despite this, a number of experts argue for its importance, particularly in understanding the course of history and social change. Differences in technology distinguish major types of societies such as hunter-gather societies, horticultural societies, agrarian societies, industrial societies, and post-industrial societies. Technology has established itself as a potent social change agent. When the society becomes more and more progressive in nature, it encourages more technology resulting in more transformative society, and the greater the rate of technological change, the greater the rate of social change.

II. THE SOCIAL MEDIA SITE OR SNS

The social network perspective brings together theories, models, and applications expressed in terms of relational concepts and processes. According to Borgatti and Foster (2003), the growing interest in research related to social network topics echoes a broader shift away from essentialist, individualist, and atomistic explanations and toward more contextual, relational, and systematic approaches. The network perspective is based on the following theoretical assumptions (Kilduff, Tsai, and Hanke, 2006; Wasserman and Faust, 1994):

1. The prevalence of social relations assumes that relationships among actors are fundamentally important.
2. The pervasiveness of social embeddedness means that actors and their actions are viewed as interdependent rather than autonomous units.
3. The social utility of network connections is viewed as enabling the flow of resources, which may be material or nonmaterial, between actors.
4. The structural patterning of social life network structure permits or constrains individual action.

In more pragmatic terms, networks are differentiated based on the nature of the relationships. One can come across advice networks aimed at problem resolution; trust networks in which tactical and political information is exchanged; and communication networks that follow typical job-specific communication patterns (Krachkhard and Hanson, 1993). Recent network analysis advances have shifted from static depictions of social networks to dynamic representations of complex adaptive systems that exhibit both persistence and change. One of the major difficulties for network scholars is to investigate the dynamic interaction between individuals' psychology and the complexity of the social networks in which they interact (Kilduff et al., 2006).

III. THE PERSONALITY TRAITS (BIG FIVE FACTOR)

Although many conceptualizations of personality exist, the field of personality psychology has seen a growing acceptance of the Five Factor Model (FFM/Big Five) of personality (Digman, 1990; McCare, 1994) since the 1980s. According to this model, there

are five universal traits that include all aspects of human personality: openness, neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Integrationists (Epstein, 1979, 1986) addressed the question of how exactly personality traits affect behaviour, demonstrating that traits can be strong predictors of behavioural trends when aggregated across diverse situations. In general, traits are better at predicting cross-situational trends than they are at predicting what a person would do in a single, specific situation. However, the modern interactionism approach within psychology takes into account the person-environment interaction and accounts for the situational manifestations of the traits. The integrationist perspective is based on four basic postulates (McAdams 2006):

1. Actual behaviour is the result of a continuous multidirectional interaction or feedback process between the individual and the encountered situation.
2. The individual is an intentional, active agent in this interactional process.
3. On the personal side of the interaction, cognitive and motivational factors are important determinants of behaviour;
4. And on the situational side, the psychological meaning of situations for a person is an important determining factor.

The trait activation principle states that personality traits are expressed in response to trait-relevant situational cues (Tett and Guterman, 2000). Personality is an increasingly popular topic to be explored more and more in the field of psychology. It has been defined variously by different psychologists. Psychologists have used the term personality to be used considerably more than social attractiveness as one would love one's personality. In fact the definitions by various psychologists on personality not only includes an individual's characteristic ways of conducting factors as physique, appearance, intelligence, aptitudes and character traits. Recent research has also looked into how certain personality types may affect an individual's structural position in the network. Klein et al. (2004) investigated the impact of demographics, values, and the Big Five personality traits on network centrality. They discovered that people who are highly educated and low in neuroticism but high in emotional stability became high in advice and friendship centrality and low in adversarial. The impact of other personality traits on network structure has also been studied. Mehra et al. (2001) investigated the relationship between self-monitoring orientation and network position and workplace performance. Casciaro (1998) also investigated how personality traits (need for accomplishment, need for affiliation, self-monitoring, and extraversion) and situational factors (position in the hierarchy, work status, and network centrality) influence the ability to accurately assess the social network structure. However, none of these studies specifically addressed the mechanisms by which Big Five personality traits and structural position interact over time and influence one's personality. Correspondingly the discussion of personality traits as a nature and the origin of the Big five model and dimensions of personality would provide us with better understanding of personality traits and the effect of it in the usage of social media.

IV. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Arshad (2015) conducted a research study on 80 students aged between 18 to 25 in master degree programs selected from G.C University Faisalabad Pakistan to exclusively

study the socio-economic situation and their effect on students. The result of this indicated that male students have high level of self-esteem and female students have higher academic performance.

Jaradat and Atyeh (2017) conducted study in Jordan on 380 participants and found out the relationship between big five factors and social media. It was observed that gender, age, college type, expense, experience etc. also moderately affect. It was found that mean spent more time on social media.

Sanaktekin and Aydin (2010) conducted research on 172 participants in Turkey and the major of his research was the spending more time over the social media and less communication as it used to be a few years back as he calls it a traditional way of communication that is face to face interaction. This quantified the effects of certain personality traits on social media, with a focus on extraversion, neuroticism, and self-esteem.

According to Khalid (2015), college students use social media more than any other generation, as his survey of 18- to 29-year-olds shows that 84 percent of the sample reported using Facebook, 44 percent reported using Google+, 40 percent reported using Twitter, and 36 percent reported using Instagram. This research also reported that the students to whom face to face survey was conducted used social media for various purposes and it was for the betterment of others, a few students used Facebook to campaign against the bad effect of smoking while others created Instagram posts having the past experience of being addicted to drugs thus campaigning against its bad effects.

Guo (2015) conducted a study in the six main lands of China among 2889 participants and found that over 60% of the participants checked their SNS accounts several times per day. This found that female users were heavier in comparison to male users. Results also found that individuals with high neuroticism show high bonding on social media sites and people with high agreeableness show the higher effect of the usage of both perceived bonding and perceived social bridging.

Sung (2017) examined studies in South Korea, and it was noted that around 16 million monthly active users and 74 percent of the users come under the age of 20s and 30s. The study also found that there is a tendency to maintain romantic relationships over social networking sites. There are significant correlations to openness, consciousness, and agreeableness, implying that SNS usage is primarily determined by personality factors such as extroverts and introverts.

MC Gahely (2019) conducted a study on 81 participants aged between 18 and 67, of which 33 were males and 48 were females. It was observed that individuals have an innate desire to be productive, and therefore, they think SNS is useless and a waste of time. Extroverts are the opposite of introverts. They are more adventurous, excited in the company of other people, and usually have a positive association in terms of communication. Neuroticism refers to the negative emotions that an individual expresses such as guilt, anger, anxiety, and depression. It has been found that individuals with high neuroticism tend to be more on social media in order to meet new people to reduce their loneliness and spend a large amount of time on SNS.

Mucan and Özeltürkayb (2014) found that 65 percent of respondents used an instant messaging system between 1 and 5 times per day, and 20 percent used such services between 6 and 10 times per day at DikuzEylul University in Turkey, using a consumer survey method. Facebook (444 respondents) and other sites were the most frequently visited websites. It also discovered a positive but weak relationship between extraversion and neuroticism, conscientiousness and neuroticism, and openness to experience and neuroticism.

Sullivan, (2017) conducted studies in the National College of Ireland and it was found that there was a kind of positive correlation in the usage of social media and personality traits. The following relationships were noted: platform for highly neurotic individuals; neurotics alone want to complete the task; they try to avoid being subject to tension or anxiety; agreeableness traits possess a high level of empathy; the extroverts have strong and plentiful connections over the SNS site and also in the real-world setting.

Wang, Jackson, Gaskin & Wang (2014) studied 266 undergraduate students from a psychology course at a large university in southern China and discovered a significant relationship between extraversion and the use of social networking sites for communication. Extroverts enjoy building and expanding their social networks. Conscientiousness had no negative relationship with SNS use. Similarly, agreeableness was discovered to be positively correlated because they are by definition friendly, warm, and sympathetic, and as a result, they should be more likely to post friendly and positive comments on other users' status updates and photos. The study also discovered that gender played a role in social media use, with males having more friends on SNS and being more likely to play online games than females, who were more likely to upload self-photos and update their status.

V. RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Since their inception in the early 2000s, social networking sites have experienced rapid growth and popularity. Attempts have been made to see how people communicate with one another and perceive themselves, and research in psychology has attempted to assess the impact of this emerging medium. Much of this research has examined how individuals present themselves in their web profiles or how one's personality affects SNS use. However, very little research has been conducted to investigate how SNS directly affect an individual's personality traits and why one would want to use various social media sites for what benefit on a personal level and why certain posts, status, etc. are shared over social media. With what intention do individuals post something on social media? Is it to show their intellectual level or to show their philosophy of life to others over the media or to express their own opinion and view?

The self-presented in the profile is socially desirable and not unrealistic, and this is what the person wishes to represent. It is also true, but not false, that the self is selective and carefully managed. This behaviour has implications for identity exploration, particularly among adolescents and young adults, who use SNSs the most and are most likely to be undergoing identity formation. If previous research indicates that SNSs shape identity, what types of specific aspects of identity are shaped? Is it really possible for young adults to develop certain traits and self-views through SNSs?

VI. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

The research is totally based on finding, the benefit after using the social media sites and not to exclusively find out the individual's personality traits and so we will be mostly dealing with the terms like:

- 1. Social media:** The use of gadgets particularly smart or cell phone through which an individual uses different kind of platforms in order to connect oneself with other over the internet in a virtual social kind of environment.
- 2. Facebook:** It is a social media platform that allows users to present themselves through an online profile; to have friends who leave comments on their pages and upload photographs.
- 3. Instagram:** It is a modern form of social media that enable users to easily share their daily activities by taking photos and editing them with the application's various filters. Users can add a caption, hash tags (using the # symbol) to describe their upload, and mention other users (using the @ symbol), which creates a link from their profile to the mentioned users' profile.
- 4. Openness:** An individual is said to be open when he or she behaves in a particular manner which is different from that of others over the media or in a real life which gives the feeling of socialness to the others. Individual who scores high on the trait of openness tend to be intellectually curious, and they report enjoying artistic pursuits (Ross, 2009)
- 5. Extrovert:** When an individual goes out of his or her to connect oneself with others and thus expresses oneself outwardly in behavior and action is termed as extrovert. Highly extrovert people gravitate towards simulating environments and are more gregarious in their thought and behaviors (Swickert, 2002)
- 6. Conscientiousness:** It is identified as competence, achievement, self-discipline, dutifulness and orderliness (Butt and Philips, 2008). Conscientiousness refers to a person's willingness to follow socially prescribed norms and rules (Bogg, 2013).
- 7. Neuroticism:** Neuroticism is a personality trait that encompasses an individual's emotional stability. Neurotic people experience negative emotions like anger, shame, and embarrassment (Haslam, 2007). When compared to the typically calm, relaxed personalities of those who are emotionally stable, high scoring neurotic individuals can be aggressive, tense, volatile, impulsive, and restless, with a tendency to experience anxiety (Chemorro-Premuzic, 2013).
- 8. Agreeableness:** It mainly specifies an individual's interpersonal qualities and social adaptability, connecting a person's cooperativeness, warmth, kindness, affection, and helpful characteristics with their interactions with others (Moore, 2012).

VII. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find the purpose of using social media i.e. to trace benefits one gains after using social media sites
2. To find the motive behind certain kind of posts and the personality traits that reinforce them.

VIII. RESEARCH DESIGN

The methodology for the research will be a qualitative descriptive method. Data was collected from the respondents by way of sharing the Microsoft form link. Questionnaires were used to collect pertinent information for the current study. Due to time constraints, the questionnaires were deemed more practical, allowing results to be collected from participants. The qualitative design allowed the investigation to learn about social media usage, the effect of personality traits on using social media sites, and the research objectives. The Big Five questionnaire (Goldberg, 1981), which consists of 50 statements, was used to assess individual scores on each of the five proposed personality traits. Participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with each of the statements on a 5-point Likert scale.

- 1. Sample:** The population of the present study was all college students belonging to North Bengal region. Using random sampling technique 107 students were chosen which constituted the sample.
- 2. The tools:** For the measurement of the personality traits, we used a standardised test developed by Goldberg and for the measurement of the usage of social media, too, which will be used by Survey Monkey, an online testing platform. Survey Monkey is a cloud-based tool that helps create, send, and analyse surveys. Survey Monkey is online survey software that helps one to create and run professional online surveys. It is very powerful and a well-known online application.
- 3. Procedure:** The area of the study is mostly based on college students in North Bengal. The study is conducted not to compare who possesses what types of personality traits; rather, the traits will be used to see the use of social media sites, how long one has been using social media, or gender comparison, but to find out the gain, the type of achievement, or the purpose one obtains by using the various social media platforms. It is true that the study is not exclusively going to find out the personality traits one possesses but to say that due to a particular trait, an individual uses social media in a way that is appropriate to themselves.

IX. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Since number research have been conducted earlier by various experts regarding the uses of media and the time spent on media, so the topic is not an entirely new concept. Rather, a thirst that led to choosing this topic was to find out the reason why an individual uses social media and how that justifies the personality traits. From the data collected, we can present the result as descriptive analysis as follows:

Table 1: Pie chart to describe the percentage of personality traits

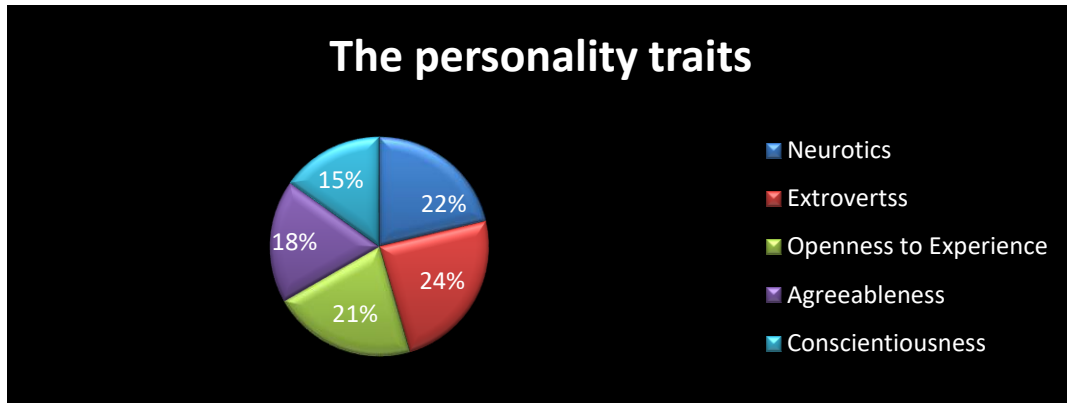


Figure 1: Diagram displaying the percentage of individuals–identified their personality traits.

The reason for using social media – as the data collected shows that many (56%) said that they use social media to be connected with others, and most of them are said to be extroverts, though there are other personality traits related to this, while others said that they have improved in self-esteem (45%) when they gain friends, and the percentage of these categories are as follows:

71% that is as many as 77 of them said they used social media to be connected whereas 28% that is as many as 30 of them have said they use social media to have better social identity. However, they have also expressed other reasons to use social media and they are as follows: to gain more friends helps gaining high self-esteem 56%, to showcase one`s talent 40%, to be liked over the SNS 39%, intellectual discussion 4% and to promote oneself 45%.

The results show that a large portion of the people who use social media to promote themselves and are willing to go above and beyond in order to make friends are mostly neurotic people who spend most of their time on social media and are more comfortable on social media than in real life experiences, which means they want to show the world how beautiful or handsome they are, the talents they have and the kind of life one lives in real They use the SNS platform to remove a temporary aloofness. Individuals possessing the traits of agreeableness are more open and active on social media as well as in real life too. So, from the above findings, it is clearly seen that the usage of social media is certainly affected by personality traits.

X. POSITIVE IMPLICATION

The implications are as follows:

- 1. Development of social factors, individual thought and behavior, and social skills:** As the usage of social media increases, there is a tendency to find out everything over the

media or the internet, and this very often helps students to increase their psychological ability as they come across new concepts or ideas over the various social media sites.

Researchers discovered that a technology: based education system is more effective than traditional teaching and learning methods and so it is said that there is a positive attitude towards the use of social media in the classroom situation in order to gain greater attention and facilitate better teaching and learning, keeping in mind the needs of the students.

- 2. Online educational community:** Social is not a new concept; it has existed for many years, if not 100 years, but the concept of creating an educational community over social media may be a new concept, as we have seen this in recent years as the pandemic hit the traditional system of teaching and learning.
- 3. Increases participation in social discussion:** Students now very often participate in social media by way of sharing their content in social discussion. Agreement and disagreement regarding social issues are put forth over social media.
- 4. Knowledge sharing:** Hansen et al. (2017) defined social media as a set of online applications and tools that facilitate and create knowledge sharing among digital media users, ultimately transforming a monologue, for example, by an organisation to customers, into a dialogue. According to previous research, social media includes a variety of internet-based tools and applications based on specific philosophical ideologies and technological foundations and functionality. Social media has altered how its users communicate and use internet-based sites as a means of disseminating content among digital media and internet users (Abbas, 2019).

XI. DILIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to the college of bengal only. Secondly the data was collected using the Microsoft form link due to the pandemic situation that gave rise to the need of using the online platform for collecting data, which though preferred but chosen as no other means were available at hand. Thirdly the sharing of the link was easy but the collection of the data was tedious task as there were two links shared (social media usage and personality traits) each containing 24 and 50 questions. Due to the time constraints and the lack of sincerity among the participants in the sense of replying the questionnaire, the sample was reduced to below 120 which otherwise could have been around 250. Due to the lack of the desired number of participants the sample size was reduced to 107

XII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The thirst was to find out the gain one aims to achieve after having used the social media site and to certain extent it has been fulfilled however there are always a vast scope to study more and to find out more about many things known and unknown. One could exclusively study about the psychological wellbeing of using social media sites. The topic itself could be researched over and again to justify the use of media and psychological wellbeing because technological advancement and scientific progress are taking place rapidly. Topics related to self-esteem and the personality traits and the usage of social media for the 21st century's in

the relation to technology-based education especially the impact of SNS on the current system of education could be investigated further.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Personality traits are an essential aspect of each individual and they shape them from an early age throughout one's life. Aside from the individual's qualities, personality traits are influenced by their experiences, the people around them, and their surroundings, and they tend to be constant across time and across relevant situations. They play an important role in the development and moulding of one's self, character, and beliefs. Social media is growing increasingly popular and is being used in a variety of fields because it allows people to interact, communicate, and collaborate in real time. To reap its benefits, it is necessary to understand how and why individuals use and engage in social media. As a result, it is critical to understand the role that personality traits play in the psychological processes that underpin social media use. The purpose of this research was to improve understanding of how each person's personality traits and attributes influence their use of social media. Personality qualities, it can be inferred, have a significant impact on social media use and engagement. The outcome of the study reveals that SNS play effective role in shaping habits, attitude, personality, and behaviors of the people.

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