

TRENDS RELATED TO SELFIE TAKING BEHAVIOR: A WAY FOR SELF-REPRESENTATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT... A trend of Selfie taking behaviour is on increase nowadays specially in young adults. Selfies serve as an innovative outlet. This self-expression permits a person to apply more noteworthy control over how others see him. Selfies let an individual test with various characters. **Objectives:** The objective of the present study was to investigate the trends related to selfie taking behaviour among university students. **Data source and setting:** to address the objectives, a sample of 200 students (100 males, 100 females) from universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi aged 18 to 25 was selected. **Period:** 6 months. **Methods:** A survey questionnaire was developed for the study to measure various aspects of selfie taking behaviour. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data. **Results:** 32% of the participants reported taking selfies every day, 37% taking 2-3 times a week while 24% taking selfies once in a week. Regarding the selfie posting behaviour the participants reported that 38% post selfies to their social networking accounts once a week, 25% 2-3 times a week, 7% post every day and 29% did not post selfies at all. Similarly, the findings also indicated that students edit their photos, prefer a specific pose to take selfie i.e. front (full face) side view or top view for the self-representation in a photo graph. Results also revealed preference for facial depiction in photographs like smiling, pout, flat expressions and fish gape as their self-representation. **Conclusion:** The usage of selfies and its posting has an impact on the self-representation of the participants.

Keywords: Selfie, Self-representation, Psychology, Behaviour.

The “selfie”- self-portraits generally taken at arm’s length using a mobile device and shared on social media- phenomenon is drifting over a number of academic disciplines and current research programs. In the event that our photos are impressions of the way we see the world, selfies are impressions of the way we see ourselves. However they are more than mere self-reflection. They are planned for more extensive gatherings of people, as though they were a type of artistry.

Indeed, even the Oxford Dictionary proclaimed that ""Selfie"" was the expression of the year in 2013, proposing that it has likewise turned into a typical reference and practice in prominent media. The selfie has been understood in relation to rapid “documenting” of the self as a “socio-cultural revolution” about “identity affirmation” a “condition” of social media, a political convergence of the object and subject of photographic practice, and as a neoliberal, even narcissistic but increasingly normative mode of “self-branding” (Cruz & Thornham, 2015). The word selfie has been defined broadly and differently by different researchers and scholars. Sorokowski et al. (2015, p. 124) define selfies as photographs “of oneself (or of oneself and other people), taken with a camera or a camera phone held at arm’s length or pointed at a mirror, that [are] usually shared through social media”. This fundamental notion captures the core elements of the selfie phenomenon. However, that phenomenon is constantly changing as the practice evolves. Some literature now adopts a broader definition to accommodate group selfies, partial selfies of body parts, timers, selfie sticks, and highly manipulated photos facilitated by app technologies such as Snapchat. Rather than confining the selfie phenomenon to a particular technology or genre of photograph or video, we follow the broad definition of Dinhopl and Gretzel (2016, p. 127), which identifies selfies as “characterized by the desire to frame the self in a picture taken to be shared with an online audience”. Carbon (2017) finds that selfies aim to communicate and express complex, multidimensional cultural messages similar to those of selfportraits from the domain of artistic painting have done for centuries (Schroeder, 2002, 2013). Selfies “reveal something about the creator in particular, but also something about humans in general” (Carbon, 2017, p. 17).

Selfies are public reflections of the way we view and present ourselves, fascinating combination of inward and outward looking. Their extensiveness has been facilitated not only by networked technology and devices such as front facing cameras and selfie sticks, but also by the internalized social conventions that make the capture and sharing of self images desirable and acceptable (Larsen & Sandbye, 2014).

Selfie Taking Behaviour and Self-Representation

Making and sharing a selfie or a surge of selfies is a type of self-reflection and self-creation. Taking selfies is about individuals attempting to make sense of who they are and extend this to other individuals. It's a sort of self-definition. Selfies are for some people a medium for conveying messages about their personality and give a method for character

development. “People who have access to self-representations are keen to make use of them. In this way people can **control the image projected**, and of course the fact that the image is on display marks the **importance and status of the person represented**.” says Terri (Cambridge university, 15th century). At the point when an individual feels that people are occupied with his appearance, he tries to present himself more alluring to be acknowledged by the general population. With selfies one can make the pictures of his own appearances without the guide of someone else. Selfies provide individuals with the means to create their own positive image of themselves, thereby severely diluting the impact of outside opinion (selfies & mysogoni, Erin Tantum).

Selfies serve as an innovative outlet. This self expression permits a person to apply more noteworthy control over how others see him. Selfies let an individual test with various characters. The capacity to re-develop distinctive parts of an individual gives one another chance to briefly change how he acts or feels. selfies are considered as instruments for self-change and self-information and the force connections that move and are challenged when new gatherings of individuals share their self-representations in people in general circle (*The return Of Selfies*).

The simplicity of self-documentation, the standard of regular sharing, and the interconnectedness between representations of self and narrative practices of others, work to create a domain in which the self is unavoidably on display. Within this context, the Selfie becomes a way to claim representational control, to be at once the artist and the subject, to manage inevitable visibility with self-directed hyper-visibility. And yet, this moment of reclaimed representation at the same time turns into a minute of examination, as the media through which subjects share their hyper-visible images afford comment and explicit evaluation.

The study was conducted to investigate the trends related to selfie taking behaviour among university students. The selfie taking and posting behaviours have garnered much of the interest of researchers. Psychological research on selfies has emerged as a vital and growing sub-field. Psychology research has explored motivations for selfie taking, selfie-posting (Pounders et al., 2016; Sung et al., 2016), age and gender differences in posting selfies (Dhir et al., 2016), and self-esteem based effects of selfie posting (Wang et al., 2017). Selfies help to present oneself in a more alluring way which provide them the opportunity to be more presentable to others. The phenomenon of selfie taking behavior indicates a strong urge of

people to present themselves or to manage their representation to others through sharing pictures.

The objective of the study is to investigate the trends related to selfie taking behaviour among university students.

Results and Discussion

A trend of Selfie obsession is on increase nowadays specially in young adults. Selfie obsessed people have gone to great lengths to put out their best picture and gain appreciation from others. It has become a trend or more like a necessity for young adults to show off and express themselves through selfies which are later posted on social networking websites. The more 'likes' they get, the higher is their self-esteem. The study focused on self-representation in selfies. The study was designed to see whether selfie-obsessed young adults prefer the representation of self in their photographs or not. It was hypothesized that there is a significant gender difference in selfie obsession and self-representation.

From the study we did not find any significant results proving that people taking selfies do prefer in showing their selves. The test applied for the prediction of representing self in selfies showed that results are insignificant and that selfie obsession has no relation with the representation of self. However, the study showed that males are more obsessed with taking selfies than females. We also observed that most of them edit their selfies after taking them. This shows their obsession with selfies and spending too much time trying to look better, richer and more attractive to people on the other side of screen that they may not even know in real life.

In our study participants reported that they prefer taking selfies nearly every day. Though exact data about the worldwide pervasiveness of selfies are not available, the estimations in existing selfie statistics are impressive. For example, the Google statistics in 2014 (Brandt, 2014) reported about 93 billion selfies taken per day – counting only Android phone users. According to a poll with 3,000 people, among those aged 18–29, every third picture taken is a selfie (Hall, 2013). Selfie accessories, such as selfie-sticks, have been bestsellers, and phone producers have adjusted their products for the sake of selfies.

The frequency of posting selfies on social network website indicated that most of the people preferred posting their selfies on social network once a week. According to the social comparison theory, individuals make comparisons and evaluate themselves based on others

around them. Therefore, it is only human that individuals compare their physical appearance to others, which is without doubt evident on social networking sites as posting pictures would be a main feature of these sites. Research suggests women make more social comparisons on social networking sites than men (Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis&Kruck, 2012).

Other studies linking selfie posting behavior and narcissism report that people who post selfies on social networks like Instagram and Facebook are more likely to exhibit what some psychologists call the “dark triad” of personality traits, according to two previous studies of nearly 1,200 men and women who completed personality tests and answered questions on their online habits. This dark triad consists of narcissism (extreme self-centeredness), Machiavellianism (manipulation of others) and psychopathy (acting impulsively with no regard for other people’s feelings), they noted (Fox et al. , April 2015).

Prevalence of editing selfies to enhance self-representation was observed in majority of the population. According to a research, over two thirds of Australian women admitted to altering their own pictures before posting them on various social media sites. Editing images before posting them on social media has become a trend with celebrities, with everyone from Beyonce and Kim Kardashian to Aussie TV presenter Laura Csotán accused of altering their pictures (Beauty Heaven).

Preference of front (full face) is observed for the self-representation in a photo graph. Some prefer side view. Very few of the respondents prefer top view or slightly side view. According to Dr.Anukka Lindell, senior lecturer in experimental neuropsychology at Melbourne's La Trobe University, the left side of your face is your best. By searching the hashtag #selfie, and analysing 10 most recent shots out of 100 female and 100 male users, she determined that there were more left-sided selfies than right-sided ones .i.e. 92% of the sample showed an overall posing bias, with 41% favouring their left cheek, 31.5% preferring their right cheek, and 19.5% repeatedly posting midline selfies(Lindell, 2017). Whilst research indicates that midline poses are perceived as being just as emotionally expressive as left-cheek poses, they are less-frequently adopted for a simple reason: they appear less flattering.

Smiling while taking selfies, is observed in many selfie-takers. Study conducted at La Trobe University in Australia revealed that most selfie-takers (92 percent) do prefer a specific pose (Lindell, 2017). Results showed that most of the selfie takers prefer smiling while taking selfies.

Pouting or duck face was also prevalent in the population i.e. 13%. Psychologists have identified cues in selfies such as duckface, (a facial expression made by pushing lips outwards and upwards to give the appearance of large, pouty lips) and say that the expression may hint at neuroticism (Quack, 2014).

In conclusion, the results of this study show that the usage of selfies and its posting has an impact on the self- presentation of the participants. We cannot generalize our results, as it is a very small portion of the population and does not fully represent all young adults who have taken large number of selfies and share on their online network. This study merely provides a jumping off point for the topic of selfies; more research should be done about selfies at a global level. Moreover, an in depth study can be done using a more representative sample, and large surveys and quantitative analysis with more relevant variables like gender, age etc would give precise results.

References

Would be provided on request.