The Big Five Different Facebook Personalities in Regards to Content Posted

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Facebook is the most widely used social networking website, but no two profiles look exactly the same. Due to its non-homogenous nature, Facebook meets the different individual needs of its users (Eftekhar, Fullwood, & Morris, 2014). Some people post status or pictures documenting their dinner or their activities for the day, whereas others express their political opinions, love lives or feel the need to complain (Marshall, Lefringhausen, & Ferenczi, 2015). This paper explains the connection between the Big Five personality traits and the different ways individuals tend to use Facebook.

The characteristics included in the “Big Five” model of personality are in terms of extraversion, neuroticism, openness to new experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness. (Caci, Cardaci, Tabacchi, & Scrima, 2014; Eftekhar, Fullwood, & Morris, 2014; Marshall, Lefringhausen, & Ferenczi, 2015). In these personalities extraverts are very social, talkative and active; neurotic individuals are prone to stress and anxiety; people who are highly open to new experiences are known to be smart, creative, and curious; agreeableness is related to friendliness-being kind and understanding versus cold and self-centered; and conscientiousness is represented in reprehensive or careful, hardworking and diligent individuals. (Caci et al., 2014; Eftekhar et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2015)

Caci and colleagues (2014) performed a path analysis on 654 Facebook profiles to study the predictive role of personality variables on user behavior. The path model used the Big Five as independent variables and four dependent variables: account age, daily sessions, duration and number of friends (Caci et al., 2014). The results showed that the Big Five personality variables are predictors in different aspects of Facebook use (Caci et al., 2014).
The results of the path analysis demonstrated that openness proved to be the strongest predictor of account age and a predictor of the number of friends (Caci et al., 2014). Conscientiousness showed an inverse correlation to daily sessions, duration and number of friends, whereas extraversion was directly correlated (Caci et al., 2014). Finally, agreeableness predicted a low number of friends (Caci et al., 2014). These findings reveal a connection between the user’s personality and their behavior on Facebook.

Marshall and colleagues (2015) examined the relationship between personality traits and actual content posted in status updates. Five broad subject matters of Facebook updates were identified: Social activities & everyday life, intellectual pursuits, accomplishments, diet/exercise, and significant relationships (Marshall et al., 2015). In addition to the Big Five, Marshall et al. (2015) also look at narcissism and self-esteem as variables affecting the content of status updates by collecting data from surveying 555 Facebook users.

Marshall et al. (2015) found the extraverts most often update about social activities and everyday life. Users who scored high in openness post intellectual status content such as current events, research or political views (Marshall et al., 2015). Narcissistic individuals are more likely to post about diets/exercise and other accomplishments (Marshall et al., 2015). Lastly, low self-esteem was associated with posting status about relationships (Marshall et al., 2015). These results give insight to how Facebook updates reflect more than just the immediate information given. Eftekhar et al. (2014) maintain, “Online behaviors tend to mimic what would be expected of individual’s offline personality characteristics” (p.162).

The research of Eftekhar et al. (2014) focuses on the correlation of Facebook users’ photo activity and their Big Five personality traits. The procedure consists of 115 Facebook users who
participated in a questionnaire and a content analysis that was taken off their profiles (Eftekhar et al., 2014). A photo codebook was then used to review the content (Eftekhar et al., 2014). The results showed evidence that the Big Five personality traits lead to the use of different Facebook preferences in order to gratify the user’s psychological needs (Eftekhar et al., 2014).

All the features tested proved to be predicted by at least one of the five personality traits (Eftekhar et al., 2014). Neuroticism and extraversion predicted uploading a significant amount of photos (Eftekhar et al., 2014). Conscientiousness users preferred to organize their photos and create new albums (Eftekhar et al., 2014). Lastly, the most amounts of ‘likes’ went to agreeable users (Eftekhar et al., 2014).

This paper explains the connection between the Big Five personality traits and the different ways individuals tend use Facebook. Facebook usage is a reflection of the user’s personality. The Big Five personality traits heavily impact our profiles and every user preference (Caci et al., 2014; Eftekhar et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2015). It’s important to understand the different ways people use Facebook because today’s world relies on social media more than ever before (Caci et al., 2014; Eftekhar et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2015). In order to continue to move forward and communicate effectively, we can’t afford to be unaware of the role social media plays in shaping our future (Caci et al., 2014; Eftekhar et al., 2014; Marshall et al., 2015).
References

