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# WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? MEASURING SELF-PROMOTIONAL AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIORS ON FACEBOOK AMONG TERTIARY STUDENTS

**Abstract.** The social media revolutionized the power of collaboration and networking. If overused and misused, it provides negative impacts among users. This paper presents the prevalence of self-promotional behaviors on Facebook among students in a university in the Philippines. A total of 106 college students were randomly selected as respondents of the study. An adapted survey questionnaire was used during analysis. The results show that the respondents promote their selves on Facebook every semester. Specifically, the result shows that the respondents update their status, post photographs of their selves and change profile pictures once a month. On the other hand, the respondents update their profile information, tag pictures of their selves and upload "selfie" pictures every semester. It is concluded that the students sometimes possess behaviors that tend to be tied to narcissism on Facebook.

**Keywords:** ICT in Education; Facebook in Education; eLearning; Narcissism

## I. INTRODUCTION

**The problem statement.** Facebook has become a subject of scrutiny in terms of the user's behavior. Marcial (2013) revealed that 15 out of 355 respondents are addicted to Facebook and the degree of addiction among the Facebook-addict respondents is high. Further, studies show that there were further associations between social skills and openness, positivity, and attachment to Facebook. In particular, Oldmeadow, Quinn, & Kowert (2012) assert that those high in social expressivity (e.g. ''I love to socialize'') were more attached to their Facebook profile and more open and positive about it than those low in social expressivity. In the same manner, respondents of Seto (2012) study revealed that they use Facebook because of boredom, out of habit, to read what others are doing, to share photos, and to look at pictures they are tagged in. Likewise, Aydın, Muyan, & Demir (2013) showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between shyness and following pictures, videos, status, comments on Facebook. The result means that when shyness increased, following FB pictures, videos, status, and comments will also increase. Number of Facebook friends, time spent on Facebook, and Facebook usage frequency should be taken as continuous variables (Aydın, Muyan, & Demir (2013). Most importantly, Carpenter (2012) identified the types of people who may build a socially disruptive atmosphere on Facebook. He presented several attributes indicative of being a narcissist. He specifically presented self-promotional and anti-social behaviors on Facebook, which serves as the framework in this paper.

**Analysis of recent studies and publications.** The social media revolutionized the landscape in communication, collaboration, and sharing. Social media is defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media technologies take on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. Among the common social media are social

networking sites (SNS). Boyd & Ellison (2007) presented three (3) basic services that users can do with SNS. First, users can construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system. Second, users can articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection. Lastly, users can view and navigate their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Facebook is considered as the most popular SNS. Fowler (2012) cited that people have made 140 billion friend connections on Facebook. As it matures, Facebook users are getting younger. Further, he mentioned that the median age of a user joining today is about 22, down from 23 for a user who joined in the year 2010. Internet World Stat reported that there were 29,890,900 Facebook users in the Philippines as of December 31, 2012, equivalent to 28.8% penetration rate. This statistics marks the Philippines as the 8th top Facebook users in the Asian countries. Facebook is used by many universities in the Philippines as part of their social media engagement. For example, the official Fan Page of Silliman University is created to keep students, alumni, and friends updated on recent developments of the school. Likewise, Facebook impacts on the teaching-learning processes in higher education. Vrocharidou, Asderaki, & Korres found that the students significantly valued Facebook in terms of collaboration such as group assignments, exchange of information, school-related news and activities. Other academic use of Facebook includes discussions and announcement facility (Ivy, 2012); and library, faculty & administrative uses (Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, & Witty, 2010).

**The article's goal.** This paper aims to measure self-promotional behaviors and anti-social behaviors on Facebook among tertiary level students. Specifically, this paper presents the prevalence of self-promotional behaviors. It also describes the level of anti-social behaviors on FB among students in Silliman University, Philippines. In this paper, self-promotional behaviors include FB activities such as posting status updates, posting photographs of one's self including selfie, updating profile information, tagging pictures of one's self, accepting a friend request from a total stranger, and making mean comments on someone's status if they said something negative about one's self. On the other hand, anti-social behaviors include FB activities such as checking for comments about the self, seeking self-support, and feelings.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

The study implemented a descriptive method. The study was conducted at Silliman University. Silliman University, founded in 1901, is located in Dumaguete City, Philippines, and offers 24 academic programs. A total of 106 tertiary level students were randomly selected as respondents of the study. These respondents are students enrolled in a computer-related subject during the second semester of the school year 2013-2014.

The instrument used in data gathering to accomplish the specific objectives of the study was a survey questionnaire. Questions related to self-promotional behaviors are adapted from Carpenter (2012). The survey administration was done online using Google Docs. The hyperlink of the online survey questionnaire is posted in the Silliman Online University Learning, a Moodle-based course management system. The first page of the survey is the online consent form that explained the rights of the participants, including their agreement to participate in the investigation. Three respondents from the randomly selected students did not participate in the survey. The statistical tools employed in the data processing are the frequency and weighted mean.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Self-Promotional Behaviors

#### 3.1.1. Posting status updates to FB

As shown in Table 2, 36 (33%) of the respondents post status updates to FB at least once a week, 24 (22%) at least once a day, 15 (14%) at least once a month, 12 (11%) at least once a semester and 10 (9%) posted at least once a year. Interestingly, 7 (6%) respondents do not update their FB status. The result may imply that the respondents are sometimes active in posting messages on their FB walls. The result is close to the findings of (Panek, Nardis, & Konrath, 2013) that most respondents in their study (N=486) updated their Facebook status 2–3 times per week (24%) or daily (29%). Users who frequently post are more likely to post negative content (Galioto, Hughes, & Zuo). In the same manner, Moreno, et al. (2012) revealed 33.9 % of their respondents displayed depression symptoms on their FB posts. Also, a report stated "4.8 million users had posted a status update saying they would be spending the day, opening themselves up to the risk of burglary" cited in Wrenn (2012). According to S. Shyam Sundar, Distinguished Professor of Communications and co-director of the Media Effects Research Laboratory at Penn State, cited in Williams (May, 2014), Facebook walls and profiles reflect the identities of the users. Facebook posts can affect professional career (Mikulec, 2012). Most importantly, "higher narcissistic impression ratings were related to higher quantities of social interaction on Facebook and higher quantities of information posted about the self" (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008). There are 510 comments posted, and 293,000 statuses are updated every 60 seconds on Facebook (Internet Marketing Solutions, 2014). According to the website, "there are a lot of engaged and active users, but also a huge amount of information competing for their attention, so quality and strategy on your part matter".

#### 3.1.2. Posting photographs of one's self including selfie on FB

There are 39 (36%) respondents who said that they post photographs of their selves on FB, 28 (26%) at least once a week, 17 (16%) at least once every semester, 7 (6%) at least once a year, 6 (6%) at least once a day. Nine (8%) respondents also indicated they do not post photographs of their selves on FB. Surprisingly, 32 (29%) respondents reported that they do not upload and post a selfie. Twenty-five (23%) respondents said that they upload selfie at least once a month, 21 (19%) at least once a week, 14 (13%) at least once every semester, 11 (10%) at least once a year and 3 (3%) respondents posted selfie everyday. The results show that the respondents sometimes display photographs of one's self and post selfie occasionally. Notably, there 136,000 photos are uploaded in every 60 seconds on Facebook, posted in Internet Marketing Solutions (2014). FB users who are more likely to upload photos have narcissistic tendencies (Mehdizadeh, 2014). FB users who are frequently uploading photographs including selfie may have tendencies to addiction. Selfie addiction is linked to narcissism, low esteem and mental illness posted in (Daily Health Post, 2014). A headline of Mirror in its issue of May 23, 2014 states "selfie addict took 200 a day - and tried to kill himself when he couldn't take perfect photo" (Aldridge & Harden, 2014). According to the news, this 19-year old boy spent 10 hours a day taking up to 200 selfie photos using his iPhone. The boy started posting selfie at the age of 15. On a positive side, "uploading photos of a significant other is a demonstration of commitment to others online" (Farrugia, 2013). In the same manner, Alloway, Runac, Qureshi, & Kemp (2014) argue that the

"frequency of posting photos of themselves was not predictive of narcissism for either males or females".

### 3.1.3. Updating profile information on FB

In terms of the frequency of users updating their profile information on FB, 3 (3%) indicated at least once a day, 3 (3%) at least once a week, 22 (20%) at least once a month, 24 (22%) at least once every semester, and 42 (39%) at least once a year. 12 (11%) respondents do not update their profile. The result may imply that the respondents update their FB profile information occasionally. FB users who are spending significantly more time on their Facebook profiles daily are reported to have higher narcissism (Sala, Skues, & Grant, 2014). Likewise, FB users who are more attached to their Facebook profile possessed high in the social expressivity (Oldmeadow, Quinn, & Kowert, 2012). It is noted that five new profiles are created every second in Facebook as posted on the website of (Internet Marketing Solutions, 2014). The website explains that with this number, the "potential audience on Facebook is growing exponentially". However, there are there are 83 million fake profiles. According to the website, "there are various reasons for fake profiles, including professionals doing testing and research, and people who want to segment their Facebook use more than is possible with one account".

### 3.1.4. Tagging pictures of one's self on FB

More than the majority of the respondents indicated that they tagged a picture of oneself on FB. Six (6%) respondents tagged pictures at least once a day, 16 (15%) at least once a week, 23 (21%) at least once a month, 20 (18%) at least once every semester and 6 (6%) said that they tag pictures at least once a year. However, 35 (32%) respondents stated that they do not tag pictures of their self on FB. The result may denote that the respondents label photos of one 's self occasionally. Tagging of photos were associated with narcissism (Alloway, Runac, Qureshi, & Kemp, 2014). Females reported a significantly higher frequency of viewing, posting, and tagging photos compared to their male peers. (Alloway, Runac, Qureshi, & Kemp, 2014). According to an infographic, there are 1,323,000 photos are tagged in 20 minutes (Facebook Statistics, Stats & Facts For 2011, 2011).

### 3.1.5. Accepting a friend request from a total stranger on FB

Almost half of the respondents (42%) indicate that they do not accept a friend request from a complete stranger on FB, assuming they do not appear to be a fake profile. Almost a quarter (20%) said that they accept a friend request from a total stranger on FB at least once a month, 15 (14%) at least once a week, 10 (9%) at least once in a year, 6 (6%) at least once a day and the same goes to at least once a semester. Surprisingly, 1 (1%) respondent accepts a friend request every hour. The results may imply that the students accept a friend request from a total stranger occasionally. The result may denote that FB friends of these respondents are their schoolmates, childhood friends, family or relatives. The result may be compared to a survey that revealed that 90% of UK FB users have received an invite from a stranger and 51% of these users 'friend' them (Wrenn, 2012).

### 3.1.6. Making mean comments on someone's status if they said something negative about one's self

Almost all (75%) respondents said that they did not make mean comments on someone's status if they said something negative about their selves. A few said 9 (8%) that they make mean comments at least once a year, 5 (5%) at least once a month, 4 (4%) at least once a week, 3 (3%) at least once a day and also with those who comment negatively to at least once every semester. The results might imply that the students make mean comments on someone's status if they said something negative about their self on FB very rarely.

*Table 1.*

**Frequency of the Self-promoting Behaviors on Facebook**

| How often do you . . . | at least once an hour | at least once a day | at least once a week | at least once a month | at least once every semester | at least once a year | I don't do this |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| post status updates to FB? | 2 (2%) | 24 (22%) | 36 (33%) | 15 (14%) | 12 (11%) | 10 (9%) | 7 (6%) |
| post photographs of yourself on FB? | 0 | 6 (6%) | 28 (26%) | 39 (36%) | 17 (16%) | 7 (6%) | 9 (8%) |
| update your profile information on FB? | 0 | 3 (3%) | 3 (3%) | 22 (20%) | 24 (22%) | 42 (39%) | 12 (11%) |
| change your profile picture on FB? | 0 | 1 (1%) | 8 (7%) | 55 (50%) | 30 (28%) | 12 (11%) | 0 |
| tag pictures of yourself on FB | 0 | 6 (6%) | 16 (15%) | 23 (21%) | 20 (18%) | 6 (6%) | 35 (32%) |
| upload selfie pix on FB? | 0 | 3 (3%) | 21 (19%) | 25 (23%) | 14 (13%) | 11 (10%) | 32 (29%) |
| accept a friend request from a total stranger on FB (assuming they do not appear to be a fake profile)? | 1 (1%) | 6 (6%) | 15 (14%) | 22 (20%) | 6 (6%) | 10 (9%) | 46 (42%) |
| make mean comments on someone's status if they said something negative about you on FB? | 0 | 3 (3%) | 4 (4%) | 5 (5%) | 3 (3%) | 9 (8%) | 82 (75%) |

### 3.1.7. Number of Friends

This study shows that the respondents have an average of 1642 FB friends on their account. Nabi, Prestin, & So (2013) present unique evidence that the number of Facebook friends can indirectly benefit both physical health and psychological wellbeing through processes involving perceived social support. Similarly, Kim & Lee (2011) assert that the number of Facebook friends may enhance users' subjective well-being. As cited by Fowler (2012), people have made 140 billion friend connections on Facebook.

### 3.2. Anti-Social Behaviors

### 3.2.1 Checking for comments about the self

Facebook comments can elicit desirable and undesirable responses from other people (Forest & Wood, 2012). They conclude that Facebook is an appealing venue for self-disclosure especially for persons with low self-esteem. Table 3 is the level of agreement towards anti-social behaviors as perceived by the respondents. As shown in the table, behavior in checking for

comments about the self is rated with a weighted mean of 1.97 described as somewhat agree. Specifically, all items in this behavior (A1 to A4) are described somewhat agree. The result denotes that the respondents sometimes check for comments about one's self. The results may also imply that the respondents somewhat possessed anti-social behavior. "The more positivity participants with low self-esteem expressed, the more comments and "Likes" their friends gave" (Forest & Wood, 2012).

*Table 2.*

**Level of Agreement towards Anti-Social Behaviors on Facebook**

| Anti-Social Behaviors | $\bar{x}$ | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Checking for comments about the self | 1.97 | Somewhat agree |
| A1. I use FB to see what people are saying about me. | 1.92 | Somewhat agree |
| A2. I like to read my Facebook newsfeed to see if my friends have mentioned me. | 1.90 | Somewhat agree |
| A3. It is important to me to know if anyone is saying anything bad about me on Facebook. | 2.20 | Somewhat agree |
| A4. I usually know what people are saying about me on Facebook. | 1.86 | Somewhat agree |
| Seek self-support | 1.58 | Disagree |
| B1. Whenever I am upset I usually post a status update about what is bothering me. | 1.67 | Disagree |
| B2. If something made me sad, I usually post a comment about it on Facebook. | 1.49 | Disagree |
| B3. Posting a status update to Facebook is a good way to vent when something is bugging me. | 1.73 | Disagree |
| B4. If I post a Facebook status update about something that is bothering me, it makes me feel better. | 1.59 | Disagree |
| B5. I use Facebook to let people know that I am upset about something. | 1.44 | Disagree |
| Mean of Means | 1.78 | Somewhat Agree |

### 3.2.2. Seeking self-support

Facebook is an online platform where users can express one's feelings and emotions. It is a place where users can find or offer support. It is even used to provide social support not only among ordinary users but also in improving customer service in the business. Politi (2012) concludes in his blog that social support effort in customer service using Facebook is a powerful mechanism that will need focus and be given utmost priority. In this study, it is interesting to highlight that the respondents rated disagree ($\bar{x}$ = 1.58) on statements related to seeking self-support. It is also highly noted that all statements (B1 to B5) are evaluated disagree as perceived by the respondents. The result implies that the students rarely seek self-support among his/her network of FB friends. The result may also signify that the students rarely express their feelings and emotions on Facebook. The result may also imply that the students are not publicly open in Facebook when they are upset and bothered. Frison & Eggermont (2015) show that "perceived emotional support through Facebook was predictive of a reduction in adolescents' depressed mood". In the same manner, Nabi, Prestin, & So (2013) discovered that greater perceived social support is associated with reduced stress.

### 3.2.3. Feelings when people do not comment as much as users would like on their status updates on FB

Table 3 shows the distribution of user's feelings when people do not comment as much as they would like on their status updates. In multiple responses, almost all of the respondents do not feel negative emotions when their friends do not comment on their status updates. Less than a

quarter of the respondents feel sometimes annoyed (18%), irritated (17%), aggravated (14%), and angry (11%) when there are no comments posted on their status updates. A very few respondents feel that they are irritated, angry, annoyed and aggravated. The result is consistent because the students rarely seek self-support among his/her network of FB friends (Table 2).

*Table 3.*

**Feelings when people do not comment as much as users would like on their status updates on FB**

| How do you feel when people do not comment as much as you would like on your status updates on FB? | I feel a great deal of this emotion | I feel of this emotion | I feel sometimes of this emotion | I feel none of this emotion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Irritated | 1 (1%) | 3 (3%) | 18 (17%) | 84 (77%) |
| Angry | 1 (1%) | 1 (3%) | 12 (11%) | 92 (84%) |
| Annoyed | 1 (1%) | 5 (5%) | 20 (18%) | 80 (73%) |
| Aggravated | 1 (1%) | 3 (3%) | 15 (14%) | 87 (80%) |

## 4. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the students sometimes possess behaviors that tend to be tied to Facebook narcissism. There is a moderate degree of self-promoting behaviors on Facebook as experienced by the students. The level of anti-social behaviors on Facebook as perceived by the students is also moderate. The students are watchful if their friends are talking about them. On the positive note, the students do not hunt for support when they are upset, sad, annoyed and bothered. The study recommends conducting further studies about the variables that affect narcissism.

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# ЩО В ТЕБЕ НА ДУМЦІ? ВИМІРЮВАННЯ САМОРЕКЛАМИ І АНТИ-СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ПОВЕДІНКИ НА FACEBOOK СТУДЕНТІВ ВИЩИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДІВ

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**Анотація.** Соціальні засоби масової інформації революційно вплинули на співпрацю і мережну взаємодію користувачів. Зловживання або неправильне використання ресурсів може призвести до негативних наслідків. Ця стаття демонструє і підтверджує поширення саморекламної поведінки на Facebook студентів університету на Філіппінах. У дослідженні приймали участь 106 обраних довільно студентів коледжу, які відповіли на запитання спеціально розробленої анкети. Результати показують, що респонденти займаються саморекламою на сторінках Facebook кожен семестр. Зокрема, результати анкетування демонструють, що респонденти оновлюють свій статус, розміщують і відправляють свої фотографії, змінюють фотографії у профілі раз на місяць. З іншого боку, респонденти оновлюють інформацію, відмічають і завантажують «селфі» у своєму профілі кожен семестр. Зроблено висновок, що іноді студенти схильні до нарцисизму у своїй поведінці на сторінках Facebook.

**Ключові слова:** ІКТ в освіті; Facebook в освіті; електронне навчання; нарцисизм

# ЧТО У ТЕБЯ НА УМЕ? ИЗМЕРЕНИЕ САМОРЕКЛАМЫ И АНТИ-СОЦИАЛЬНОГО ПОВЕДЕНИЯ НА FACEBOOK СТУДЕНТОВ ВЫСШИХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЙ

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**Аннотация.** Социальная среда революционно повлияли на сотрудничество и сетевое взаимодействие пользователей. Злоупотребление или неправильное использование ресурсов может привести к негативным последствиям. Эта статья демонстрирует и подтверждает распространение саморекламного поведения на Facebook студентов университета Филиппин. В исследовании принимали участие 106 избранных произвольно студентов колледжа, которые ответили на вопросы специально разработанной анкеты. Результаты показывают, что респонденты занимаются саморекламой на страницах Facebook каждый семестр. В частности, результаты анкетирования демонстрируют, что респонденты обновляют свой статус, размещают и отправляют свои фотографии, меняют фотографии в профиле раз в месяц. С другой стороны, респонденты обновляют информацию, отмечают и загружают «селфи» в своем профиле каждый семестр. Сделан вывод, что иногда студенты склонны к нарциссизму в своем поведении на страницах Facebook.

**Ключевые слова:** ИКТ в образовании; Facebook в образовании; электронное обучение; нарциссизм.