



## The Impact of Social Media on Personality

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### Abstract

The basic reason of this study was to know the different personality dimensions who uses social media platform. The present study was an attempt to find out the actual impact of Social media on the Personality. All 200 participants of the age group between 30 to 40 years participated in this study. They were administered Five Factor Inventory, Internet Addiction Test. The purposive sample was used for data collection. Most of the time Men as well as women spend time on searching different types of information on various kinds of social media platforms. It was also searched out that certain personality dimensions are also influenced by social media use. Openness was also concerned to searching different types of information, sending various pictures and status updates to friends. Neuroticism was related with updating one's status updates more frequently. Agreeableness was associated with sending more photographs, but spending less time gaming. Conscientiousness was also related with a lower chances of gaming and seeking information. High level of conscientiousness people are less involved in social media use. Initially the descriptive statistics were analyzed. The Mean and SD for men and women on sub dimensions of personality tests were calculated. Gender differences in men and women on personality dimensions were analyzed. It showed a significant difference between men and women. Women scored significantly higher on neuroticism, openness to experience than men. Women scored lower on conscientiousness dimension than men.

*Keywords:* Social media, neuroticism, openness to experience, conscientiousness

### **Introduction**

Internet addiction has relationship with some personality traits in adolescents such as neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Other studies show that low levels of neuroticism and high levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness decrease internet addiction risk in adolescents. Agreeable and Conscientious students reported lower Internet addiction. High internet addicted adolescents group was low on openness to experience dimension. It was revealed that there was a negative connection between internet addiction and openness to new experiences. It was reported that there was a positive relation between internet addiction and neuroticism. According to this research, neuroticism can be a danger factor in terms of internet addiction. It can be consideration that people with high levels of neuroticism avoid face-to-face communication with others. Therefore, they use internet more to interact with other people (Yan & Sui, 2014). It was examined that there was a negative association between internet addiction and extraversion. Extraverted people have a tendency to demonstrate energetic and assertive behaviors for acquiring their life goals (Costa & McCrae, 1992). At the similar time, extraverted people may use to virtual relationships less because they can begin pleasing and secure interpersonal relationships in their actual life (McCrae, 1998). Hence, extraverted individuals may utilize internet at a reasonably lower level (Yan, Li, &

Sui, 2014). Individuals with high score on openness to experience have more curiosity and interest in various things (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In this admiration, both real and virtual life situation can offer these individuals with a lot of opportunities to satisfy their curiosity and interest. Various researchers found that there is a negative relation between Internet addiction and openness to experience dimension. There are various studies which have shown that there was negative association between internet addiction and agreeableness (Durak & Senol-Durak, 2014). They may prefer exhibiting this type of behaviors in on-line settings because displaying this tendency in day to day life will lead to a lot of problems. As a result, these circumstances may cause persons with low levels of agreeableness to use more Internet. The negative relation between internet addiction and agreeableness is supported by other research findings in the literature (Randler et al., 2014). People with low score on conscientiousness leads to Internet addiction and individuals with high score on conscientiousness are not inclined to use Internet excessively. No consistent relationship was observed between internet addiction and openness to experience, extraversion, and neuroticism (Randler, 2014). Montag et al. (2010) studied that high conscientiousness and high self-directedness were negatively interrelated with Internet addiction. There was a negative relationship between agreeableness and internet addiction. Students who scored low on agreeableness mean

they were using more Internet (Randler, 2014). Tuten and Bosnjak (2001) investigated that only neuroticism and openness to experience were concerned to Internet use among college students. Openness to experience was positively related to using the Web for entertainment and product information; and neuroticism was negatively associated with Web use activity. Erwin and Colleagues (2004) stated that introvert people or socially anxious people use more Internets. They want to avoid being alone and disconnection from face to face relationship. Introvert individual uses Internet for communication as a substitute for face to face relationship. Montag et al. (2011) explicated that Internet addiction was concerned with low self-directedness and low conscientiousness. Social media use-

A study conducted by Whaite et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between personality characteristics, the use of social media, and social isolation. They observed that there is a high correlation between the use of social networking sites and the trait of neuroticism, while the correlation was low for the trait of extroversion and average for the rest of the traits. Whaite et al. (2018) also suggest that the least personality traits users of social media are agreeableness, and if they use social media, it will be to enhance their social connections.

Colley and Malthy (2008) received 1200 postings from United Kingdom and American

participants. They selected randomly 400 participants. They used content analysis to understand the nature of posts men and women sent to various people through Internet. It was discovered that women's postings were associated with making online new friends, meeting their partners, searching information, shopping, studying online, while men's postings were related with searching various jobs and career options, positive social and political information. Women used Internet more often than men for various reasons. Kuss and Griffiths (2014) observed that adolescent girls in Germany were using Internet excessively. They were using internet for social communication, and it fostered a sense of belonging and they excluded themselves from real friends. Girls use Internet for chatting purpose with various people, and boys are more using Internet for playing game online.

### **Method**

#### **Hypotheses**

- 1. Women would score higher on neuroticism than men.
- 2. High social media users would score higher on openness to experience than low score on openness to experience dimension.
- 3. Women with high social media use would score higher on agreeableness than men.
- 4. Women with social media use would score lower on conscientiousness than men.

**Tools-**

NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) by McCrae and Costa (1992): This inventory was developed by Costa and McCrae (1992). It consists of 60 items, measuring five personality factors; responses are given on a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly agree ‘to Strongly disagree’. The internal consistency for the NEO-FFI scales was calculated with the use of alpha coefficient. The coefficient was .86, .77, .73, .68 and .81 for N, E, O, A and C dimensions respectively. When the NEO-FFI was correlated with the domain scales of NEO PI-R, correlations were .92, .90, .91, .77, and .87 for N, E, O, A, and C dimensions respectively. Social media use scale is developed by Lin, Wang, and Chen (2016). There are 17 items. It is 9- point Likert scale ranging from 1(*Never*) to 9 (hourly or more). The internal consistency for Social media use scale was also calculated with the use of alpha coefficient. Convergent validity was done.

**Result**

**Table 1- Mean, SD, and F ratio for Social media use as (IV) and Personality dimensions (DV)**

Variables	Social media users Women (200)		Social media users Men (200)		F	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Neuroticism	28.25	5.34	24.47	5.20	5.12	<.01
Openness to experience	29.32	6.20	23.36	4.33	7.80	<.01
Agreeableness	27.45	4.19	22.18	4.22	5.20	<.01
Conscientiousness	22.66	5.20	27.29	5.29	20.13	<.01

**Discussion**

The hypothesis one states that women would score higher on neuroticism than men. Table 1 shows that the mean for women on neuroticism

( $M = 28.525$ ,  $SD = 5.34$ ) is significantly higher than the mean for men ( $M = 24.47$ ,  $SD = 5.20$ ). The ANOVA [ $F(1, 396) = 5.12$ ,  $p < .01$ ] showed significant differences between women and men on neuroticism. It shows that women are higher on neuroticism than men. These findings are consistent with the following results. It was also observed that women are higher on neuroticism dimension than men (Costa, 2003).

Second hypothesis also explains that high social media users would score higher on openness to experience. Table 1 shows that the mean for high social media users on openness to experience ( $M = 29.60$ ,  $SD = 6.20$ ) is significantly higher than low score ( $M = 23.36$ ,  $SD = 4.33$ ) on openness to experience dimension. The results from ANOVA, [ $F(1, 396) = 7.80$ ,  $p < .01$ ]

demonstrated statistical significant difference between high social media users and low score on openness to experience dimension.

Third hypothesis states that women with high social media use would score higher on agreeableness than lower social media use men.

Table 1 shows that the mean for high social media use on agreeableness ( $M = 27.45$ ,  $SD = 4.19$ ) is significantly higher than the mean for lower social media use men ( $M = 22.18$ ,  $SD = 4.22$ ). The results on the agreeableness dimension [ $F(1, 396) = 5.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ] revealed statistical significant difference between high social media use women and lower social media use men.

Fourth hypothesis also shows that the mean for women with social media use would score lower

on conscientiousness than men. Table 1 shows that the mean for conscientiousness ( $M = 22.66$ ,  $SD = 5.20$ ) is significantly lower than the mean for conscientiousness ( $M = 27.29$ ,  $SD = 5.29$ ). Table 1 indicates that on the conscientiousness dimension, ANOVA [ $F(1, 396) = 20.13$ ,  $p < .01$ ] demonstrated statistically significant difference between women and men with social media use on conscientiousness dimension.

### Conclusion

1. Women had scored higher on neuroticism than men.
2. High social media users also scored higher on openness to experience than low score on openness to experience dimension.
3. Women with high social media use scored higher on agreeableness than men.
4. Women with social media use scored lower on conscientiousness than men.

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### Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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