

PREDICTING SELFIE-POSTING BEHAVIOR THROUGH SELF-ESTEEM, NARCISSISM AND EXHIBITIONISM AMONG INDIAN YOUNG YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of taking and sharing selfies on social networking sites (SNSs) has become pervasive in everyday life. This empirical study was carried out to investigate significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior. A web-based survey was conducted on social media users geographically located in Lucknow (India). A total of 1073 social media users participated in the survey. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), an interdependence technique, was employed for the measurement and the structural relationship among the latent factors. The study confirmed that self-esteem and narcissism are significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior. However, exhibitionism is not a significant predictor of selfie-posting behavior. Moreover, self-esteem is also a significant predictor of narcissism. The findings of the present study underline that Facebook (26.3) per cent was a top platform for groupies selfie posting; similarly, WhatsApp (25.8) per cent was noted as the top platform for individual selfie posting.

Keywords: Selfie-Posting Behavior, Exhibitionism, Self-Esteem, Narcissism, SEM

Introduction

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are the most popular and frequently used social networking sites among young people (Perloff, 2014). Their widespread availability has enthralled billions of people worldwide (McCrorry et al., 2020). Many have become accustomed to social media and spend a significant portion of their daily lives on these platforms (Rideout et al., 2010; Sample, 2019; Sharma et al., 2022a). Far-flinging connectedness and easy communication through smartphones and tablets have multiplied the popularity of social networking sites (Valkenburg et al., 2006; Sawyer, 2011; Sharma, 2021). Individuals can now create their profiles and exchange information and photos with other members on social networks (Stefanone et al., 2011). According to a report published by Statista Research Department, over 3.6 billion people used social media in 2020, which is expected to rise to nearly 4.41 billion by 2025 (Statista, 2021). The report further states that internet users spend an average of 144 minutes every day on social media (Statista, 2021). This whopping number shows the increasing popularity and widespread adaptability of social media sites globally. In common parlance, young people

aged 18-29 are the highest social media users, and hence selfies are rampant at this stage. Previous research has shown that young women take and post more selfies on social media than men (Biolcati, 2019).

A selfie is a self-portrait photograph shot with a digital camera or a smartphone and shared on social networking sites (Moreau, 2015). Taking selfies and groupies and publishing them on social media has become a popular online activity (Wang et al., 2017). According to previous studies, selfies and groupies are the most popular photographs shared on social media among young people (Hu et al., 2014; Jang et al., 2015). This domain of knowledge has gained scholarly attention in recent years. Still, selfie-posting behavior is an emerging topic in academia. The majority of selfie research talked about selfies and individual differences (Qiu et al., 2015). Previous studies on selfies focused on the phenomenon as a personality trait (Qiu et al., 2015) or a set of self-regulatory behaviours used to satisfy narcissism (Barry et al., 2017) or seek peer recognition (Chua & Chang, 2016). Scholars have shown that men post a selfie on social networking sites (SNSs) according to the conventional standard of masculinity

opponent to these women expose themselves as affiliative. Through online activities, women try to be in touch and expand their social networks and seek social satisfaction (Joiner et al., 2012; Dhir et al., 2016; Biolcati, 2019).

Selfie-presentation and self-preoccupation lead to better social self-esteem (Bodroža et al., 2022). Selfie-posting behavior increases one's egotism or vice versa (Sorokowski et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2018). Selfie-posting behavior through social networking sites was also examined using the theory of planned behavior (TPB). The results confirmed that attitude towards selfie-posting behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and narcissism are the significant predictors of intention to post-selfie (Weiser, 2015). The primary motivations for selfie-posting are attention-seeking, communication and entertainment (Kim & Chock, 2017).

Previous studies critically examined selfie-posting behavior in the context of motivation (Patil et al., 2019; Pounders et al., 2016) and its association with personality traits (Sorokowski et al., 2016). However, there are fewer studies that have examined the impact of selfie posting behavior on self-esteem, narcissism and exhibitionism and that too among the young youth in the Indian context. Hence, this study bridges this gap by examining whether self-esteem, exhibitionism and narcissism are significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

A "Selfie" is a self-portrait snapshot taken with a smartphone held in hand or supported by a selfie stick and posted on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat (Richa et al., 2021). Oxford Dictionaries declared it the word of the year for 2013. This neologism describes the process of photographing oneself and posting it on social media (Shin et al., 2017). With the rise in popularity of the selfie, several types of research examining selfies from a socio-psychological standpoint have developed. These researches can be divided into two categories: first- studies that look at the relationship between personality traits and selfies (Chua & Chang, 2016; Sorokowski et al., 2015; Weiser, 2015), and second- research that

looks into how people react to selfies in social situations (Lu et al., 2015; Mazza et al., 2014). The first category emphasizes that a selfie is a powerful tool for self-presentation, which is the foundation for the second group of studies (Shin et al., 2017). Few empirical studies have empirically investigated how taking and sharing selfies influence selfie-takers (Chua & Chang, 2016).

Many studies to date have demonstrated that selfie-posting behavior is positively associated with narcissism and that too in men (Fox & Rooney, 2015; Sorokowski et al., 2015; Weiser, 2015). However, there is a scarcity of information about their personality traits (Sorokowski et al., 2015). Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) indicated that social media usage serves two essential social needs: the need for belongingness and the need for self-presentation. Previous studies have explained a broader range of behaviours related to self-presentation on social media platforms, such as choice of Facebook profile picture and other online photo sharing behaviours (Back et al., 2010; Gosling et al., 2011; Ong et al., 2011; Stefanone et al., 2011). Selfie or groupie posting can be considered a form of self-disclosure behavior. In addition to social comparison theory, social capital theory and uncertainty reduction theory could explain reasons for self-disclosure on social media (Wang et al., 2017). According to Ellison et al. (2007), there is a strong association between utilizing Facebook and bridging social capital. People with low self-esteem and life satisfaction benefit the most from Facebook. People with lower self-esteem gain more from Facebook than the people who have higher self-esteem (Steinfeld et al., 2008).

Contrary to this, Forest and Wood (2012) claimed that Facebook was classified as a safe and enticing tool for persons with poor self-esteem, with their posts being higher in negative and more positive. This paradoxical result implies that different social media uses can affect one's self-esteem differently. In addition to the theory of social capital, uncertainty reduction theory might also predict the self-disclosure behavior of people (Wang et al., 2017). Concerns about online teen privacy have indicated improved privacy habits and less information for teens (Chen et al., 2015). Some privacy strategies may minimize uncertainty to make interaction

easier. It is evident from these two theories that sharing selfies and groupies on social networking sites could improve social capital so that the psychological advantages of using social media, such as increasing self-esteem and life satisfaction, are enhanced.

Social comparison theory says that there might be upward or downward comparisons between those who often post selfies and individuals who often see a selfie. People who often post selfies and groupies on social networking sites exhibit higher self-esteem and narcissism than those who rarely post selfies and groupies (Wang et al., 2017). Similarly, people who frequently see selfies and groupies on social networking sites might have lower self-esteem and life satisfaction than those who rarely see selfies and groupies (Wang et al., 2017). Hence, all three theories are the building blocks for the present study and pave the theoretical foundation for hypotheses formulation.

Self-Esteem and Selfie-Posting Behaviour

Self-esteem relates to assessing the self-worth or satisfaction an individual makes to evaluate oneself (Shin et al., 2017). It is the global feeling of self-respect or sufficiency or widespread feelings of acceptance, kindness, and self-report (Coopersmith, 1967; Crocker Major, 1989; Rosenberg, 1965). High self-esteem is a powerful predictor of happiness and satisfaction in relationships (Baumeister et al., 2003; Orth & Robins, 2014). To increase self-esteem, people prefer to convey and interpret content on social media depending on their feelings, state of mind, and points of view (Bareket-Bojmel et al., 2016). Previous studies have shown that self-esteem has an impact on social media usage (Andreassen et al., 2017; Barker, 2009; Błachnio et al., 2016; Ehrenberg et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2012).

Favourable comments on social media might increase self-esteem. Contrary to this, unfavourable or negative feedback can create insecurities, high self-consciousness, and low confidence (Fox & Rooney, 2015). People with increased self-esteem were more likely to utilize SNS as a mean of communication with peers (Barker, 2009). They are more intended to comment on profile pictures of other people (Wang et al., 2012). People who exhibit lower self-esteem have a strong addiction to instant

messaging and Facebook (Andreassen et al., 2017, Błachnio et al., 2016).

Some other studies also indicate that social media usage has an impact on the level of self-esteem (Shaw & Gant, 2004; Valkenburg et al., 2006). Internet use has been shown to dramatically reduce loneliness and depression, while social support and self-esteem have significantly enhanced (Shaw & Gant, 2004). Social media usage by young people significantly and indirectly influences their social self-esteem and well-being (Valkenburg et al., 2006). It is also evident from the previous studies that positive feedback on social media increases the self-esteem and well-being of young people. In contrast, negative feedback decreases self-esteem and well-being. Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

H₁: Self-esteem would positively predict selfie-posting behavior.

Narcissism and Selfie-Posting Behavior

Narcissism is defined as "a sense of superiority, self-admiration, and interpersonal exploitiveness" (Bogart et al., 2004; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Narcissists tend to be more self-obsessed, showy, egotistical, self-promoting, and conceited (Fox & Rooney, 2015). Exaggerating one's achievements and talents is common practice among narcissists (Farwell & Wohlwend Lloyd, 1998; John & Robins, 1994). Their primary motive is to get the "admiration" of others. Hence they make efforts to draw "attention" (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001).

Narcissists look towards the people who make them feel special and enhance the feeling of "self-worth" (Campbell & Foster, 2007). Posting selfies on social networking sites may satisfy the ambitions of a narcissist (Arpaci et al., 2018). For instance, a narcissist may upload a selfie online as a kind of self-aggrandizement in the hopes of receiving "likes" from others. Moreover, narcissism has been demonstrated to be a predictor of online social activity (Sorokowski et al., 2015). Therefore, it is worth studying the linkage between selfie-posting behavior and narcissism. Kapidzic (2013) has found that narcissism is a strong predictor of selfie-

posting behavior. A narcissist is more likely to share selfies on social networking sites than others (Wang et al., 2012). A sample of 276 college students confirmed that grandiose and exhibitionistic forms of narcissism are significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior (Koterba et al., 2021).

Age, gender, time spent on social media and narcissism are significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior (Vardeman & Gangadharbatla, 2021). 439 Filipinos students sample confirmed that narcissism is significantly related to selfie-posting behavior, Filipinos men have been seen as more narcissistic comparably women. Previous studies have demonstrated a significant and positive association between narcissism and selfie-posting behavior (Lee & Sung, 2016; Sorokowski et al., 2015; Weiser, 2015). Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

H₂: Narcissism would positively predict selfie-posting behavior.
Self-Esteem and Narcissism

Self-esteem is defined as one's opinion of oneself, whether positive or negative (Rosenberg, 1965). It is characterized by a broad sense of self-worth or sufficiency as a person, as well as generalized emotions of self-acceptance, goodness, and self-reporting (Coopersmith, 1967; Crocker & Major, 1989; Rosenberg, 1965). Positive comments received on social media may help in boosting one's self-esteem (Richa et al., 2021). On the other side, a lack of positive feedback (likes, comments, etc.) may result in anxieties, hypervigilance, and poor confidence (Fox & Rooney, 2015). Narcissists prefer to divulge more information about themselves and, as a result, crave the adoration of others and thus satisfy their self-esteem (Mehdizadeh, 2010; Davenport et al., 2014).

Selfies are predicted to be posted by narcissists on social media to boost their self-image, that in turn satisfies their self-esteem (Arpaci et al., 2018). Previous studies have found a significant and positive association between self-esteem and narcissism (Lee & Sung, 2016; Halpern et al., 2016; Davenport et al., 2014). Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in

previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

H₃: Self-esteem would positively predict narcissism.
Self-esteem and Exhibitionism

Exhibitionism is known as online self-disclosure. It is an urge to post personal information on social networking sites so that others may admire it (Arpaci et al., 2021). Koskela (2004) defined exhibitionism as "individuals desire to disclose and share their personal details or incidents of personal lives to attract attention of others". Exhibitionism is an attitude of posting a high number of selfies (Fox & Rooney, 2015; Poonia et al., 2021). The most common kind of exhibitionism is shown by archetypal young females pouting in different stances (Richa et al., 2021). Objective Self-Awareness (OSA) theory illustrates that a selective form of exhibitionism, mainly positive presentation on social media, usually boosts self-esteem (Walther, 1996). Earlier research has shown that individuals prefer to exhibit their positive and socially acceptable self-images on social media to generate a favourable impression (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008). Positive forms of self-presentation on social media enhance self-esteem (Cho et al., 2009; Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). High levels of exhibitionism are associated with a greater propensity to draw the attention of others and a higher level of self-disclosure that, in turn, satisfies the need for self-esteem (Murray, 2015). Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

H₄: Self-esteem would positively predict exhibitionism.
Narcissism and Exhibitionism

Narcissism is an element of a personality trait that was discernible by the lavish and a too optimistic self-view in context with individual physical appearance (Kim et al., 2016). An individual having narcissistic nature presents gorgeous and self-propelled photos themselves on SNSs (Chua & Chang, 2016; Diefenbach & Christoforakos, 2017; Fox & Rooney, 2015). Physical attractiveness may also be one of the underlying causes of narcissistic self-focal points and public display over SNSs. In order to make a show of their

superiority over others, narcissists often resort to exhibitionism (Rose & Campbell, 2004). Narcissists feel they are exceptional and unique and, as a result, are entitled to more than others and hence exhibit themselves (Brunell et al., 2011). Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

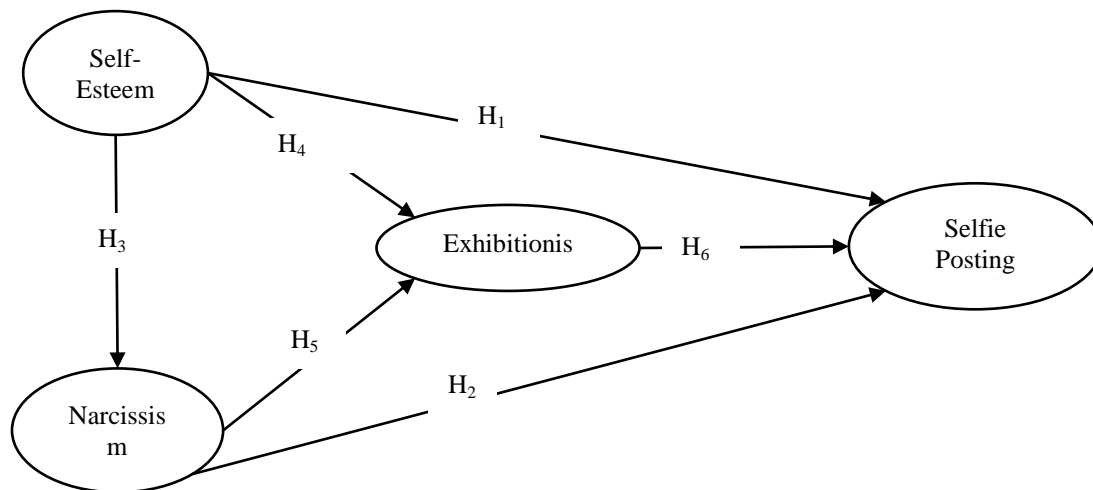
H₅: Narcissism would positively predict exhibitionism.

Exhibitionism and Selfie-Posting Behavior

The growth of selfie culture has been widely

demonstrated beneficial impact on the behavior of people who post selfies on social media. Several authors, including Senft and Baym (2015) as well as Eunice et al. (2016), have made connections between selfie addiction and harmful mental states such as narcissism and hyperactivity (Nauert, 2015; Barry et al., 2017), body dysmorphia (McKay, 2014), psychosis (Gregoire, 2015), and accident-causing behavior (McKay, 2014) by paying more attention to the camera than one's surroundings (Hughes, 2015). Therefore, on the basis of evidence found in previous studies, the following hypothesis is postulated for the present study:

Figure 1 Proposed Research Model



ascribed to two fundamental factors: narcissism and self-esteem (Walker, 2013;

H₆: Exhibitionism would positively predict selfie-posting behavior.

Weiser, 2015; Kathrynmetal., 2016; Wang et al., 2017). The relationship between selfie posting habits and numerous personality qualities such as preoccupation, self-image, social support, desire for connection, narcissism, hyperactivity, perfectionism, and impulsivity have been investigated in several research (Wortham, 2013; Martino, 2014; Singh & Tripathi, 2016; Jain et al., 2021). According to the findings, people who share selfies and strive for the ideal selfie are shown to be egotistical and obsessed (Richa et al., 2021). Fox and Rooney (2015) concluded that selfie posting activity is significantly connected with personality characteristics, with selfie posting being greater among men who self-report narcissism being the most common kind of behavior. Seidman (2015) and Weiser (2015) discovered that social exhibition, defined as adoration and a sense of superiority, has a

Methodology

Procedure and Participants

The target population for the present study comprises social media users in Lucknow (India). Participants were selected randomly and not any specific bifurcation was made. Data was collected from those social media users who assisted the researcher in increasing statistical power and accomplishing greater occupational heterogeneity (Langelaan et al., 2006; Rashid et al., 2022; Sharma et al., 2021). A total of 1500 social media users were contacted, out of which 1073 returned duly filed questionnaires and hence constituted the sample for the study. The data of this study was collected with the help of a self-administered questionnaire (Hanaysha et al., 2021) via both personal visits using random sampling to the concerned social media users and a web-based questionnaire using snowball

sampling. This study is purely cross-sectional; a non-experimental correlation field study design was followed (Sharma et al., 2022c). The responses ranged from 1 (*strongly disagrees*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Measures

Selfie Posting Behavior: Selfie posting behavior was measured using five statements adopted from Arpacı et al. (2018). All items were measured using a 5-point fully labelled Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree), and responses were averaged for later analysis (M=4.40, SD=1.58; Cronbach's α =.799). The sample item is *I enjoy posting a selfie on social media*.

Self-esteem: Self-esteem was measured using the four statements adopted from the scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). It is the most widely used and the best scale available in the existing literature that measures self-esteem. The sample statement is that *I feel that my selfie has a number of good qualities*. The items were later on averaged for subsequent analysis (M=4.49, SD=1.45;Cronbach's α =.84). All items were measured using a 5-point fully labelled Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree).

Narcissism: It was assessed using the 13-item Narcissism Personality Inventory (NPI-13) which was developed by Ames et al. (2006). The sample statement is *everybody likes to see my posted selfie on social media*. The items were later on averaged for the subsequent analysis (M = 4.27, SD =1.38; Cronbach's α =.86). All items were measured using a 5-point fully labelled Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). **Exhibitionism:** The well-tested scale for the measurement of exhibitionism was adopted from the literature developed by Hollenbaugh and Ferris (2014). It is the most widely available scale in the existing literature which exactly measures exhibitionism. The sample statement is *posting selfies for attention*

by the people. The items were later on averaged, for further analysis (M = 4.09, SD =1.42;Cronbach's α =.90). All items were measured using a 5-point fully labelled Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree).

Results

Around 52.4 per cent of the respondents were noted to be female (M = 1.52 , SD =.49). Most of the respondents fall in the age bracket of 20-25 years (M = 1.65, SD =.73). The descriptive analysis showed that 26 per cent of respondents posted a selfie on WhatsApp, and 25.8 per cent posted on Instagram. Facebook (26.3 per cent) was the top platform for groupie selfies, followed by WhatsApp (26 per cent) and Twitter (24.5 per cent). The correlation coefficient was the most widely used and applicable statistical method in summarizing social and scientific research data (Benesty et al., 2009). The correlation coefficient of the measured variables is presented in Table 1. A correlation value of zero indicates that no association between measured variables is similarly closer to the value of r coefficient irrespective of the directions; the stronger the linear relationship between the two variables, the more commonness (Taylor, 1990: Sethi, Pereira, & Arya, 2021; Islam et al., 2021; Arya, Sethi, & Paul, 2019; Arya, Verma, Sethi, & Agarwal, 2019; Arya, Sharma, Sethi, Verma, & Shiva, 2018)

Table 1 Constructs correlation among the variables

Constructs	SP_B	E_X	N_	S_E
SP_B	1			
E_X	.191**	1		
N_	.495**	-.022	1	
S_E	.662**	.234**	.529**	1

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, SP_B=Selfie-posing behavior, E_X=Exhibitionism, N_ = Narcissism, S_E=Self-esteem

As shown in table 1 selfie posting behavior

Table 2 Normality Statistics

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
SP_B	.070	329	.000	.967	329	.000
N_	.085	329	.000	.956	329	.000
S_E	.100	329	.000	.947	329	.000
E_X	.457	329	.000	.433	329	.000

Note: SP_B=Selfie-posing behavior, E_X=Exhibitionism, N_ = Narcissism, S_E=Self-esteem, df= degree of freedom, Sig.= Significance.

was correlated with exhibitionism ($r=.191, p<.01$), narcissism ($r=.495, p<.01$) and self-esteem ($r=.662, p<.01$). Exhibitionism with narcissism ($r=-.022, p>.01$) and self-esteem ($r=.234, p<.01$). Narcissism with self-esteem ($r=.529, p<.01$).

The most important assumption in multivariate analysis is that the data set is normal, resulting in a normal distribution or bell-shaped curve. The K-S test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) was used to check for normalcy in the current investigation.

The K-S test resultant figure is clearly

expressed in terms of the significance level of less than 0.05 in Table 2, indicating that divergence from normality (Field, 2013; Hair, 2009; Shapiro et al., 1968). The K-S test indicates that they are significant, implying that the null hypothesis H_0 : data was not normally distributed; all variables failed to meet the multivariate analysis' normality requirement. As a result, previous researchers have suggested that if the data is not normally distributed, the researcher can use multivariate analysis techniques such as the structural equation model (SEM) (Booth & Lee, 2003; Field, 2013; Hair, 2009).

Table 3 Reliability and Validity Statistics

<i>Constructs/Statements</i>	<i>Loading</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>	<i>MSV</i>	<i>Cronbach's α</i>	<i>VIF</i>
<i>Self-Esteem (SE)</i>		0.807	0.512	0.493	.842	1.895
On the whole, I am satisfied with my selfie ***.	0.779					
I feel that my selfie have number of good qualities ***	0.675					
I am able to do things as well as most other people***	0.714					
I feel that I am a person of worth ***	0.689					
<i>Exhibitionism (E_X)</i>		0.903	0.701	0.473	.902	1.101
Posting selfie for attention by the people ***	0.864					
Because my posted selfie make me cool among my peers***	0.910					
Posting selfie to gain fame or notoriety***	0.814					
Because I like when people see selfie about me***	0.754					
<i>Selfie Posting Behavior (SP_B)</i>		0.800	0.693	0.593	.799	1.823
I post selfie on social media.***	0.633					
I think using social media for posting selfie is good idea ***	0.685					
I enjoy posting selfie on social media. ***	0.589					
I encourage my peers to post selfie on social media.***	0.635					
I help my peers to post selfie on social media.***	0.663					
<i>Narcissism (N_)</i>		0.857	0.502	0.387	.865	1.490
I know that my selfie are good because everybody keeps telling me so ***.	0.753					
I like to be the centre of attention while posting Selfie. ***	0.814					
Everybody likes to see my posted selfie on social media. ***	0.669					
I think I am a special person ***	0.624					
I expect great deal at posted selfie on social media from other people.***	0.602					

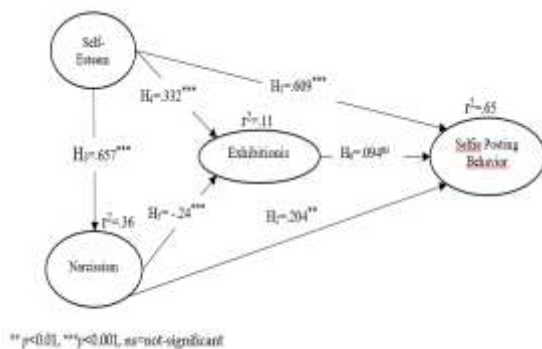
Note: **SP_B**=Selfie-posing behavior, **E_X**=Exhibitionism, **N_**= Narcissism, **S_E**=Self-esteem. **VIF**= Variance Inflation Factor, **CR**= Composite Reliability, **MSV**=Maximum Shared Variance.

Psychometric properties (convergent validity, discriminant validity and reliability) of the measurement model were assessed using SPSS version 20.0. Table 3 shows that the results of the average variance extracted (AVE) value were ranged between .668 to .783, which is more than the benchmark of 0.5, suggesting convergent validity (Sundin & Horowitz, 2002).

Additionally, the square root of the AVE (presented in Table 3) for each latent variable is greater than the correlations, signifying the discriminant validity.

Further, composite reliability (CR) coefficients are greater than the threshold limit of 0.7 (Bacon et al., 1995, Field, 2013). Model test indices were examined before testing the proposed hypotheses by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Model fit indices are found to be satisfactory CMIN/DF=2.25,GFI=.905,CFI=.937, NFI=.893, IFI=.937, RMSEA=.062, RMR=.047)

Figure 1 Structural Model with Standardized Estimates



SEM approach was deployed using SPSS AMOS 23.0 to check the structural relationship among the latent variables. The validity and reliability of the study's constructs are assessed qualitatively using the measurement model (Henseler et al., 2009).

An adequate model fit was checked with the following indices: CMIN/DF = 2.662, GFI = 0.995, CFI = 0.995, RMSEA = 0.039 and RMR=.034. The quantity of the observed and predicted covariance matrices was revealed using SEM statistics' chi-square (CMIN/DF) indices. The discrepancy function adjusted for sample size is equivalent to the comparative fit index (CFI) (Benson & Fleishman, 1994;

Curran et al., 1996; Moutinho & Hutcheson, 2014; Ansari & Khan, 2020; Nasir & Khan, 2018; Nasir et al., 2018).

The path coefficient has been presented in figure 1, in which each hypothesis is linked with the other. Interestingly, out of six hypotheses, five were seen to be accepted, and 36 per cent variance explained in narcissism, 65 per cent variance explained in selfie-posting behavior, and 11 per cent variance explained in exhibitionism. Self-esteem had a significant impact on selfie posting behavior ($\beta=.609, p<0.001, C.R.=6.46$) and narcissism ($\beta=.204, p<0.01, C.R.=2.6$), supporting H1 and H2. Significant impact was also seen on narcissism by self-esteem ($\beta=.675, p<0.001, C.R. =7.38$) supporting H3. Additionally, a significant effect was also seen on the exhibitionism of self-esteem ($\beta=.332, p<0.001, C.R.=4.77$), supporting H4.

Additionally, narcissism was seen to be significantly and negatively impacted by exhibitionism ($\beta= -.24, p<0.001, C.R. = -3.32$), supporting H5. Lastly, an insignificant influence of exhibitionism was noted on selfie posting behavior ($\beta= .094, p>0.001, C.R. = 1.40$), thus not supporting H6.

Discussion and Conclusion

In antique times, people took a group of pictures and kept them for numerous reasons for records and remembrance, but the present era is something different. The significant phenomenon of selfie-posting is extensively broadened in an everyday context. Especially, "millennials" reaching young maturity early in the 21st century, take a lot of selfies and share them on various social media, viz. Facebook and Instagram.

Most of the previous literature stressed that popularity of the posting selfies comes from technological advancements like smartphones and the emergence of various social media platforms. No doubt technological advancement eases creating an eco-friendly environment for the people to take and share pictures just by having a single click. However, the authors do not solemnly believe that all mentioned factors can be sufficiently justifiable for selfie-posting behavior.

Table 4 Hypothesis at a glance

Hypothesis			Estimate	S.E.	t-values	P	Result?
SP_B	<---	S_E	0.60	0.09	6.46	***	Significant
SP_B	<---	N_	0.20	0.07	2.60	0.009	Significant
N_	<---	S_E	0.65	0.08	7.38	***	Significant
E_X	<---	S_E	0.33	0.07	4.77	***	Significant
E_X	<---	N_	-0.24	0.07	-3.32	***	Significant
SP_B	<---	E_X	0.09	0.06	1.40	0.159	Insignificant

Note: S.E= Standard error, *** $p < 0.001$ ** $p < 0.01$

The predicting role of self-esteem, narcissism and exhibitionism on selfie-posting behavior was renowned from the previous studies in the selfie domain (Fox & Rooney, 2015; Kim & Chock, 2017; Lee & Sung, 2016; Weiser, 2015). The growing theatrical tendencies of photo-sharing on online social networking sites and social media platforms have sparked a new online social phenomenon that involves snipping self-portrait photographs and posting them on online social networking sites to get popularity. Selfies have become an iconic part of contemporary culture, and the increasing number of taking photos and sharing them on social media has now become a global challenge. Despite the increasing attention given in popular media, academic research in this domain has been quite limited. Online social media is used by millions of users every day across the world for a variety of reasons, including informal gossip and chats with family, business conversations, and product marketing (Błachnio et al., 2013; Sharma et al., 2022b). Similarly, the utilization of social media can also be seen as a tool for self-promotion (Moon et al., 2016). In recent years, Facebook got popular due to its increasing number of users. As per Statista Report, there are 340 million active Facebook users in India ("Facebook users by country 2021).

This study used social comparison theory to examine the significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior of the social media users in Lucknow India. Ultimately, the main objectives of this study were to identify the predictors of selfie-posting behavior. Accordingly, the study proposed a study model, in which exhibitionism mediates the relationship between self-esteem, narcissism and selfie-posting behavior. Results indicated that self-esteem and narcissism significantly and positively predicted selfie-posting

behavior. Similarly, self-esteem and narcissism also significantly and positively predicted exhibitionism. This finding is the toning (Wang et al., 2017), as well as the previous studies that confirmed that online posting selfies have a positive and significant influence on individual self-esteem (Shin et al., 2017). Practically speaking, a 1 unit increase in narcissism positively tends to a .20 unit increase in self-posting behavior. Although, individuals with high narcissistic in nature frequently post selfies on social media. Our result is, therefore, consistent with the previous research on narcissism (J. W. Kim & Chock, 2017) and self-esteem (Sorokowska et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018). Dark Triad (narcissism) predicted selfie posting behavior (Fox & Rooney, 2015; Kim & Chock, 2017; Lee & Sung, 2016). Consistent with our hypotheses, we found that exhibitionism mediates the relationship between self-esteem and narcissism; narcissism and self-esteem significantly and positively predicted selfie-posting behavior. In the past, selfie-posting behavior related studies mainly emphasized personality traits (Sorokowska et al., 2016; Weiser, 2015), while others focused on body research (Fox & Rooney, 2015; Ridgway & Clayton, 2016; Wagner et al., 2016). However, these two pieces of research have largely developed with each other, and the possible relation between personality traits and body image variables is overlooked. The present study innovatively integrated narcissism, self-esteem and exhibitionism and tested significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior. Narcissistic individuals post more selfies on SNSs the reason being that people feel satisfied with their bodies. Thus, our study extends previous results concerning the positive and significant relationship between narcissism and selfie-posting behavior (Weiser, 2015; Gupta & Srivastava, 2021; Goyal, Chauhan, & Gupta, 2021; Prashar &

Gupta, 2020; Gupta, Chauhan, Paul, & Jaiswal, 2020, Sharma, Zheng, & Bhaskar, 2019; Sharma et al., 2022a)

The current study confirmed the previous finding narcissism is a significant predictor of selfie-posting behavior (Scott et al., 2018). Users with a narcissistic (self-love, admired) nature generally post selfies on social media (Wang et al., 2018). Plausibly, the narcissist prefers to post more selfies on social media to display their assets and capabilities more utterly. They use SNSs as extra tools for publicity, exhibit themselves positively and seek recognition (Wang et al., 2018). The results are congruent with the previous findings self-esteem and narcissism seen to be positively associated (Brown et al., 2012). From the finding, one thing is clear narcissism made a unique positive contribution to individual self-esteem. Thus, individuals higher in narcissism tend to have greater belief in their ability to attain goals, specifically when adding self-esteem (Brookes, 2015)

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study first investigated the underlined mechanism of why social media users post a selfie-and what are the significant predictors of selfie-posting behavior? Past research emphasizes selfie-posting behavior on body satisfaction (Wang et al., 2018; Lee & Lee, 2021; Lonergan et al., 2019) and the need for popularity (Utz et al., 2012; Kim, 2020). This study demonstrated that self-esteem and narcissism are the significant predictors of exhibitionism and selfie-posting behavior. A person with high self-esteem tends to post more selfies (Alblooshi, 2015). The result of this study is consistent with the previous research (March & McBean, 2018). High exhibitionism and narcissism lead to more selfie-posting on the SNSs. The results of the current study have both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretical contribution relates to our understanding of uses and gratification theory. First, this study uncovers the main motive of selfie-posting behavior on social media, which is not identified in the previous literature. This study theoretically contributed in the sense of identifying the most significant predictor (self-esteem) of selfie-posting behavior.

This study contributes to the existing stock of literature in many ways. First, the proposed model manifested in the study represents the influential predictors of selfie posting behavior and thus broadens the scope of behavioural and psychological research streams. Second, this study extends an impregnable understanding of psychological aspects of human behavior and substantiates the existing knowledge. Third, the findings of the present study empirically test and validate the proposed model and thus increases the robustness of the model.

Managerial Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications, several managerial implications could be detached from the findings of the present study. Self-esteem was identified as the most imperative factor in understanding selfie-posting behavior. Thus, self-esteem plays a motivation based on the number of "likes" for selfie-posting behavior. Further examination of data revealed that narcissism significantly predicts selfie-posting behavior. Selfie-posting provides an opportunity for one to oneself feel bad or good. From a psychological aspect, this study could be beneficial as it provides a vivid description of psychological aspects of human behavior, viz. self-esteem, narcissism and exhibitionism and the linkage among them. Psychologists could gain new insights of the subject matter and could better understand human behavior. From the marketing perspective, social media marketers and industry practitioners must design their offerings in such a way that would satisfy the self-esteem of consumers. If it would be so, the consumers would more likely buy the products of said company.

Limitation and Future Research

Unlike the others, this research also has some lacuna that bears in mind for future research. First, the gender disparity limits the generalizability of the findings and prevents our capacity to deepen the role of gender in Selfie-posting behaviours. However, gender differences were not taken into account. So in the future, the same should be stimulated in a more balanced sample. Second, the present study is based on self-reported data which may have a different result. Third, supplementary variables should be considered for upcoming research. As Weiser, 2015 pointed out personality traits (extraversion).

Moreover, it may be worthy to consider two forms of self-esteem the (Kernis et al., 2008) Secure and fragile self-esteem. Despite these limitations, the present study extends the selfie literature highlighting that personality (narcissism) and exhibitionism are the dominant planners of selfie posting behavior on social media. Thus, the results of the present research contribute in this sense to offering valuable understandings of Selfie-posting specifically and social media in common jargon. The current study is based on a single cultural context and did not address cross-cultural comparison; more cross-cultural studies are needed in future.

Data Availability Statement

The dataset generated during and/or analysed during the current study is not publicly available due to respondents' confidential information but is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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